

CITY 2
GOVT TO LAUNCH DRIVE
TO CURB GST EVASION**OPINION 6**
OF THE FRACTION
OR THE FACTION?**WORLD 10**
BORIS JOHNSON VOWS TO 'KEEP GOING'
AMID FLURRY OF RESIGNATIONS

LUCKNOW, THURSDAY JULY 7, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



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DHAWAN TO
LEAD INDIA IN
WINDIES ODIs
12 SPORT

Uddhav camp MP stirs fear of fresh rebellion

Rahul Shewale urges Thackeray to back NDA's Prez candidate

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a development that has triggered fears in the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena camp about a fresh rebellion within the parent party, party MP Rahul Shewale has written to the Sena chief urging him to support the candidature of BJP-led NDA's Presidential nominee Draupadi Murmu.

Currently, the Shiv Sena has 18 Lok Sabha members. Of them, four MPs have already shifted loyalty from the parent Shiv Sena to the Eknath Shinde camp. They comprise Shrikant Shinde, son of current chief minister Eknath Shinde, Bhavana Gawali, Rajan Vichare. At least half a dozen MPs have either agreed to shift to the side or are in touch with Eknath Shinde.

As the parent Sena grappled with the recent unprecedented Eknath Shinde-staged rebellion that led to the party losing power in Maharashtra, Shewale posed a fresh headache to party chief Uddhav Thackeray by urging him to



Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and disaster management officials during a meeting to review the preparedness to deal with flood situations due to heavy monsoon rain, at Thane Collector's Office on Wednesday

PTI

extend support to Draupadi Murmu, a tribal woman member of the BJP and former Governor of Jharkhand.

Murmu is taking on the joint Opposition candidate Yashwant Sinha.

Given that Shewale is a loyal party man, his formal request to the party president — made through a letter submitted on Tuesday — has come as a big shock at a time when the Sena leadership has not taken kindly to the manner in which the BJP helped Sena's rebel leader Eknath Shinde engineer a split in the parent

party and formed an alliance government in the State, dislodging the MVA Government.

Behind Shewale's move there appears to be more than what meets the eye, considering that the Sersa MP's request to his party chief coincided with an appeal by the Eknath Shinde camp spokesman Deepak Kesarkar to all legislators and MPs from across parties in Maharashtra to support Murmu in keeping with Maharashtra's tradition of recognising the women's contribution to the society.

In his letter to the Sena

president, Shewale said that Draupadi Murmu hailed from the tribal community and she had made a huge contribution to public life. Before coming to politics, Murmu was a teacher and later served as an honorary assistant professor in the Shri Aurobindo Integral Education and Research, Rairangpur. Thereafter, she worked as a junior assistant in the irrigation department of the Odisha Government. Draupadi Murmu also served in an important position of the Governor of Jharkhand.

Continued on Page 9

Record 7.5L apply for IAF Agnipath

Navy to earmark 20% posts for women Agniveers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The IAF has received 7,49,899 applications under the newly launched Agnipath scheme rolled out last month. This number of aspirants is more than the last recruitment numbers which stood at 6,31,528.

Also, more than 10,000 women candidates have so far reportedly applied in the Navy, which plans to earmark 20 per cent posts for the women candidates in various wings of the service.

The candidates, who applied through online registration for the Agnipath scheme for the IAF, will now have to clear a written examination. The successful candidates will then appear for physical fitness and medical tests. The shortlisted aspirants will be inducted into the IAF as Agniveers after a year-long training.

"The online registration process conducted by #IAF towards #AgnipathRecruitment Scheme has been completed. Compared to 6,31,528 applications in the past, which was the highest in any recruitment cycle, this time 7,49,899 applications have been received," the



IAF tweeted on Tuesday.

The IAF started the registration process on June 24 after the Agnipath termed as "transformative" was launched by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in the presence of the three Services chiefs here on June 14. The Army and the Navy registration is now on.

The scheme led to mass protests in many parts of the country with the agitators damaging public property.

Several veterans, political parties and others raised doubts about the new policy as it does not provide pension and other benefits provided to regular soldiers.

However, the Government ruled out rolling back the new policy and said it consulted various stakeholders for more than two years before firming up the Agnipath scheme. It

also said the scheme will not impact the operational preparedness of the armed forces and the regimental ethos.

After a stint of mandatory four years, 25 per cent of the Agniveers will be selected for regular service of 15 years or so with full pension benefits.

The remaining 75 per cent Agniveers will be absorbed into various State and Central Government institutions, including the Defence Ministry, which has reserved ten per cent vacancies in various departments and defence public sector undertakings.

The Home Ministry reserved ten per cent vacancies for the demobilised Agniveers in the Central paramilitary. The Government also rolled out various beneficiary schemes for demobilised Agniveers.

Continued on Page 9

Kerala Minister resigns day after Constitution slur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOCHI

A day after heaping calumny on the Indian Constitution, Kerala Minister Saji Cherian resigned from the cabinet on Wednesday evening.

His Sunday's speech describing the Indian Constitution "as a best means to exploit and cheat the poor millions in the country" had led to widespread protests. Vociferous demands surfaced on Tuesday from several quarters, including the BJP and the Congress, for his resignation.

Governor Arif Mohammed Khan had told the media on Tuesday that he was sure the leader of the Government (Chief Minister) would take notice of the speech made by the Minister as the Constitution was an expression of national faith.

On Wednesday evening, Cherian had an hour-long meeting with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and later told the media that he was resigning. "My continuation as minister may come in the way of a free and fair probe and hence I am quitting. I have submitted my resignation to the Chief Minister," said Cherian.

Minutes before the announcement of his resignation, the Thiruvalla Magistrate had ordered the Pathanamthitta Police to file a case against Cherian.

Cherian's resignation is unlikely to bring down the public anger against him as Leader of the Opposition VD Satheeshan demanded his disqualification as member of the Legislative Assembly.

PT Usha, Ilaiyaraaja, Bahubali's maker, Heggade nominated to RS

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Legendary athlete PT Usha, film composer Ilaiyaraaja, film maker V Vijayendra Prasad, and philanthropist Veerendra Heggade are four eminent personalities nominated to the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi issued congratulatory messages to all the nominated members calling them an inspiration for every Indian. Twelve members are nominated by the President to the Rajya Sabha for a term of six years. These nominees, selected on the advice of the Prime Minister, are people who have made significant achievements in the fields of arts, literature, science etc.

"The remarkable PT Usha Ji is an inspiration for every Indian. Her accomplishments in sports are widely known, but equally commendable is her work to mentor budding athletes over the last several years.



Congratulations to her on being nominated to the Rajya Sabha," Modi wrote on Twitter.

PT Usha lost a historic bronze medal in 400m hurdles at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Popularly known as Payyoli Express, she established herself as the queen of Asian track and field by winning sex medals — five gold and a bronze — at Jakarta in Indonesia a year later during the 1985 Asian championships. She was also awarded the Padma Shri in the same year she starred at the Asian

Championships. Following her athletic career, Usha remained away from the public eye running her sports academy, Usha School of Athletics in Balussery, Kerala. She is married to Kabbadi player V Sreenivasan.

For Ilaiyaraaja, who hails from Tamil Nadu, the PM said his creative genius has enthralled people across generations. "His works beautifully reflect many emotions. What is equally inspiring is his life journey: he rose from a humble background and achieved so much. Glad that he has been nominated to the Rajya Sabha," Modi wrote in another tweet.

The PM also shared photos from his archives with the newly nominated members on the microblogging site.

Filmmaker Vijayendra from Andhra Pradesh is credited of having scripted the movie Bahubali and is a household name in southern Indian States.

Continued on Page 9

Naqvi, RCP quit Modi Cabinet as RS term ends

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and RCP Singh resigned on Wednesday, a day before the end of their tenure as members of the Rajya Sabha.

One of the main Muslim faces of the BJP, Naqvi looked set for a "new assignment", and an announcement to that effect is awaited, sources said. With Naqvi's exit, there is no Muslim member in the Modi Cabinet.

Singh, a JD(U) leader, was denied a Rajya Sabha renomination by party supremo and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. His resignation is a clear signal that the BJP leadership does not want to upset Nitish Kumar at a time when the relationship between the JD(U) and the BJP is hitting a new low every day in Bihar.

Singh has made no secret of his growing closeness with

the BJP and was even warmly received by the BJP workers at Hyderabad where the ruling party held its National Executive meeting.

The JD(U) leadership is keeping a close eye on Singh. The Nitish camp suspects that he could try to do a Maharashtra in Bihar by trying to break the JD(U) or help the RJD in dislodging Nitish-led alliance Government in Bihar.

A section in the BJP feels that it was high time when Nitish was shown the door even at the cost of installing an RJD regime in Bihar. This scenario could end Nitish Kumar's bargaining power and free the BJP from his shackles, BJP leaders feel.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is understood to have lauded Naqvi and Singh for their contribution to the country and the people during the Cabinet meeting.

BJP demands Mahua's arrest for insult to Goddess Kali

Saffron party raps Mamata for using jihad for vote bank

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Opposition Leader BSuwendu Adhikari on Wednesday demanded the arrest of Trinamool Congress MP from Nadia Mahua Moitra saying her remarks on Goddess Kali had hurt religious sentiments of the people and that action should be taken against her.

Moitra had made some derogatory statements while trying to justify the portrayal of the Goddess smoking a cigarette in a film. Attacking the TMC leadership for not taking any action against her, Adhikari said he was giving ten days' time to the Government to act "after which we will act."

Saying that this was the last warning to people like Moitra, he said, "This is the last time we will tolerate people using derogatory terms against



Members of BJP Mahila Morcha stage a protest demonstration in front of Bowbazar Police Station demanding immediate arrest of TMC MP Mahua Moitra for her remarks on Goddess Kali, in Kolkata on Wednesday

PTI

Hindu deities in Bengal. Next time, we will not give anyone a chance to speak against our gods and goddesses. We will not stop protesting until she holds her ears and apologises."

He added, "Already cases have been registered against her in many places, including Bengal... we want the Government to take action against Mahua Moitra ... we

will wait for another 10 days ... if they do not take action then we will move the court against her," Adhikari said.

Accusing the State Government of double standards, he said, "The State police had promptly acted against Nupur Sharma. But they have not taken any action against Mahua Moitra."

Continued on Page 9

CAPSULE

LPG PRICE HIKED BY ₹50: RATES UP BY ₹244 IN 1 YR

New Delhi:

Cooking gas LPG price on Wednesday was hiked by ₹50 per cylinder, the third increase in rates since May on firming international energy prices. Non-subsidised LPG now costs ₹1,053 per 14.2-kg cylinder in the national Capital, up from ₹1,003 previously, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

6-MONTH GAP BETWEEN 2ND, PRECAUTION DOSE

New Delhi:

The Union Health Ministry has reduced the gap between the second and precaution dose of Covid-19 vaccine for all beneficiaries from nine to six months following a recommendation by NTAGI.

CBI raids 16 spots in graft case flagged by J&K ex-Guv Malik

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday conducted a fresh round of searches at 16 locations across India over the alleged graft charges flagged by former Jammu & Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik in the award of ₹2,200 crore civil works contract for the Kuru hydroelectric power project in Kishtwar, Jammu & Kashmir, in 2019.

Malik, who was the J&K Governor between August 23, 2018 and October 30, 2019, had claimed he was offered ₹300 crore bribe for clearing two files.

The search operations were spread across two places in Srinagar, five each in Jammu and Delhi, three in Mumbai and one in Patna on the

premises of middlemen and associates involved in the project, officials said.

The CBI probe so far in the matter has revealed some financial transactions between the accused public servants, including then Chairman of the Chenab valley power projects (P) Ltd Navin Kumar Chaudhary and the middlemen, leading to a fresh round of searches, they said.

"During investigation, evidence was found revealing the alleged role of the middlemen, including the then chairman, and financial transactions between these middlemen and public servants, and accordingly, searches are being conducted at 16 locations," the CBI said in a statement.

Continued on Page 9

DGCA notice to SpiceJet for failure to offer 'safe' flights

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued a show cause notice to SpiceJet for its failure to offer "safe, efficient and reliable" air services following eight technical malfunction incidents involving the airline's planes in the last 18 days.

The DGCA also reminded the airline that its permit to operate commercial flights in the country is valid only for one more year. In its show cause notice, the DGCA said the various incidents from April 1 this year till date have been reviewed, and it was found that "poor internal safety oversight" and "inadequate maintenance actions" have resulted in degradation of safety margins.

Taking note of the show cause notice, SpiceJet CMD Ajay Singh said the airline



would be "doubly careful" and strengthen inspection of aircraft before they leave for flights. In a press statement, Singh said, "Lot of these incidents being reported are relatively minor in nature and happen to every airline. If the aviation regulator feels that there are any gaps in SpiceJet's system, we will address them."

Reacting to the DGCA notice, Civil Aviation Minister

Jyotiraditya Scindia asserted that passenger safety is paramount. "Even the smallest error hindering safety will be thoroughly investigated and course-corrected," the Minister said in a tweet.

Meanwhile, three more incidents of technical malfunction were reported on Wednesday involving SpiceJet, Vistara and IndiGo.

Continued on Page 9

PM to inaugurate 3-day seminar on NEP in Vns today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate a three-day seminar at Varanasi on Thursday which will see participation of over 300 educationists deliberating on implementation of National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.

The Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Samagam will provide a platform for leading Indian Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) to discuss, deliberate and share insights on strategies, success stories and best practices in implementing the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.

Organised by the Ministry of Education in association with University Grants

Commission and Banaras Hindu University, the seminar will bring together over 300 Vice Chancellors and Directors from public and private universities, educationists, policy makers, as also industry representatives to deliberate on how the implementation of National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, can be taken further across the country after successful implementation of several initiatives in the last two years.

Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan, will also attend the summit, a senior MoE official said on Wednesday. **See also Page 5**

Govt to launch drive to curb GST evasion

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To curb evasion of goods and services tax (GST), the state government will launch an enforcement drive for which task forces will be set up in each district.

The task force will first identify and gather relevant information about the tax evaders and this will be followed by raids by the tax authorities at the premises of the evaders.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath issued this direc-



tion after a presentation on taxation was made by the Commercial Tax department before him on Wednesday. The chief minister said that revenue from the GST and value-added tax (VAT) was steadily increasing and during the last fiscal 2021-22, the total revenue from GST and compensation was Rs 98,107 crore. The chief minister said efforts should be made in a mission mode for increasing the annual collection from GST to Rs 1.50 lakh crore. He

CM: Speed up relief to kin of deceased Corona Warriors

Lucknow (PNS): As Uttar Pradesh recorded 345 fresh cases of novel coronavirus infection, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that district-wise review of the applications related to relief for the families of the Corona Warriors, who died prematurely due to COVID-19, should be carried out by the Chief Minister's Office.

"In the districts where the applications are found pending, action will be taken against the officials concerned. This is a sensitive matter. Such cases should be given priority," Yogi said.

He said that due to the successful implementation of the policy of track, test, treat and vaccination in the state, the spread of coronavirus infection was under check as 345 new cases were found in the state in the last 24 hours.

"The positivity rate is 0.45 per cent, which speaks volumes about the effective steps taken by the government to control the spread of this infection," the chief minister said during a review meeting of Team 9 here on Wednesday.

He said that caution should be taken in view of the increase in new cases of coronavirus infection. He said the functioning of medical equipment, proper availability of doctors and paramedical staff in all hospitals should be

thoroughly examined.

The chief minister was informed by officials that 510 COVID-19 patients had recovered after successful treatment.

At present, there are 2,401 active cases in the state out of which over 2,200 are taking treatment at home.

The chief minister said that due to the apathy of the system and lack of infrastructure facilities, more than 40 paramedical training centres of the Health department in the state were closed since 1989. He said keeping in view the need of health services and for providing all necessary infrastructure facilities, the state government was starting the operation of these training centres again.

Yogi said nine nursing schools were going to start function from July 15, while 35 ANM training centres would start operation in August.

Meanwhile, scaling new heights in the ongoing vaccination drive, Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday crossed the landmark of achieving 100 per cent first dose coverage to children in the 15-17 age category.

Strengthening its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the Uttar Pradesh government is providing vaccination cover to all children in a

time-bound manner. So far, over 2,64,31,699 vaccine doses have been administered to children in the age group of 15-17.

With this, 100 per cent teenagers in this age category have received the first dose and over 88.5 per cent of them are fully vaccinated.

Similarly, over 1,44,95,214 vaccine doses have been administered to children in the age group of 12-14 in the state. In this category, about 97.4 per cent children received the first dose and over 73.7 per cent have been fully vaccinated.

As per data from the CoWIN portal updated till 12:30 pm on Wednesday, at least 34.2 crore out of the total 198 crore doses administered in the country are from UP.

Committed to providing additional protection cover to the people, Uttar Pradesh started administering booster shots (precaution dose) from January 10. Over 36.38 lakh 'precaution doses' have been administered in the state so far.

To ensure vaccine cover to every eligible individual, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has asked the officials concerned to ensure adequate availability of vaccine doses in the state and encourage the eligible beneficiaries to take the vaccine shot.

Sharp increase in UP's revenue collection

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh's revenue collection in June of fiscal 2022-23 registered a sharp increase of Rs 4,095 crore as compared to the same period in fiscal 2021-22.

The revenue collection in June 2021 was Rs 11,164 crore and Rs 15,259 crore in June 2022, which is Rs 4,095 crore higher.

The collection of tax revenue was 72 per cent of the target in the first quarter of the current fiscal 2022-23 while the collection of non-tax revenue was 54.34 per cent of the target.

Finance Minister Suresh Khanna said here on Wednesday that the goods and services tax (GST) collection in June this year was Rs 6,190 crore compared to Rs 3,481 last year.

The collection from value-added tax (VAT) in June 2022 was Rs 2,808.10 crore against Rs 2,033.44 crore in June 2021. The collection from excise duty on alcohol in June 2022 was Rs 3,146.16 crore against Rs 2,988.96 crore in June 2021.

The minister said that revenue from stamps and registration in June this year was Rs 2,144.07 crore against Rs 1,825.40 crore last year while the revenue from transport was Rs 688.55 crore against Rs 591.10 crore last year.

The non-tax revenue from geology and mining was Rs 282.43 crore in June this year against Rs 243 crore last year.

UP is likely to face a revenue shortfall of over Rs 10,000 crore this fiscal as the compensation will no longer be paid from July.

During the last fiscal 2021-22, UP had received Rs 16,439 crore as compensation. During the first quarter of the current fiscal 2022-23, UP received Rs 8,874 crore and is likely to get Rs 2,500 crore more during the fiscal.

The finance minister said the government would fill the revenue gap by improving financial administration and improving tax collection.

GST was implemented from July 2017 and then the Union government had promised to ensure 14 per cent annual increase in tax collection of the states after the implementation of the new tax regime.

This was only for five years and this period ended on June 30 this year. The Union finance ministry, during the recent meeting of the GST Council in Chandigarh, had announced that this period would not be extended.

CM pays tributes to SP Mookerjee



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath paid tributes to Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee on his birth anniversary by garlanding a picture in front of his statue installed at the premises of Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee (Civil) Hospital here on Wednesday.

Addressing the programme, the chief minister said that Dr Mookerjee was a great educationist, freedom fighter, social worker and founder president of Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

"On behalf of the state government, I pay a humble tribute to this great son of Mother India for his services to the country," the chief minister said. The chief minister said that Dr Mookerjee had actively participated in the independence of the country and in view of his services, in the interim government formed after the independence of India, he was given the impor-

tant responsibility of the ministry of industry and food department.

"Dr Mookerjee was one of the great freedom fighters of the country who exposed all the conspiracies of the British government aimed to weaken India," he said.

The chief minister said that the remarkable services of Dr Mookerjee were remembered during the Bengal tragedy.

"If Kashmir is a part of India today, it is because of Dr Mookerjee's struggle and sacrifice. He was the first to raise questions about two flags in one independent India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi fulfilled the dream of Dr Mookerjee by abolishing Article 370 giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

On this occasion, Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, Lucknow Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia, public representatives and officials of the administration were present.

Maya flays govt over confrontation on arrest of a journalist

Lucknow (PNS): Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati, on Wednesday, said the state governments should work seriously and in coordination to establish the rule of law as only then people would live in a fear-free and tension-free atmosphere.

Her remarks came after a confrontation between the Chhattisgarh Police and Uttar Pradesh Police. The Chhattisgarh cops arrived in Noida on Tuesday to arrest a journalist for airing a fake video of a Congress leader.

Mayawati, on Wednesday, tweeted that swift police action on fake news, hate speech, provocative speech had taken a serious form across the country, due to which the confrontation between UP and Chhattisgarh police over the arrest of a TV journalist made media headlines on Tuesday. She said the issue was also discussed at various social media platforms.

Mayawati said that due to such tragic developments, the rule of law was destroyed and the life of the common man was also affected. She said all governments should act in a neutral way and seriously. "Only then will people be able to get rid of tension and live in a fear-free environment. Control of anarchy and rule of law is necessary for development," the former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh added.



NOTICE

Vaibhav Singh S/o Surya Bhan Yadav, R/o - Malak Balau, Post- Atrapur, Distt - Prayagraj, his wrong DOB is 29.11.2016 while correct DOB is 29.11.2018 which is true for all purposes.

NOTICE

I, Harsh Kant Arora, Resident of Flat No.- F-4, Plot No. - 27 C, Malikpuram, Barra Kanpur have changed my name from Harsh Arora to Harsh Kant Arora vide affidavit dated 06 July 2022 before Kanpur UP.

आवश्यकता है

एस. जे. महाविद्यालय रमईपुर, कानपुर नगर

आवश्यकता है
बी.कॉम पाठ्यक्रम हेतु सहा. आचार्य की। पद, मानक एवं सेवा शर्तें यू.जी. सी./छत्रपति शाहूजी महाराज विश्व-विद्यालय/उ.प्र. शासन के अनुसार। अपने शैक्षणिक अभिलेख व्यवहृत रूप से कार्यालय में अतिश्रीघ जमा करें।

आवश्यकता है

आवश्यकता है।
मदरसा इरम माडल निस्वां रकूल, बारुदखाना, लखनऊ सहायक अध्यापक तहतानिया-01 पद, आयु न्यूनतम 18 वर्ष, शैक्षिक योग्यता आलिम अथवा उर्दू से इण्टर। पुनरीक्षित वेतन मैट्रिक्स लेवल 6 में वेतन 35400-112400
नोट:- उपरोक्त पद हेतु आवेदन पत्र विज्ञापन के प्रकाशन तिथि के 21 दिवस के अंदर प्रबन्धक इरम एजुकेशनल सोसाइटी, सी-ब्लाक इन्दिरा नगर, लखनऊ-226016 को प्राप्त हो जाने चाहिए। अंतिम तिथि के बाद प्राप्त आवेदन पत्रों पर कोई विचार नहीं किया जाएगा। साक्षात्कार की तिथि सूचित कर दी जाएगी। इस हेतु कोई यात्रा भत्ता देय नहीं होगा। काबिलियत/अर्हता मदरसा बोर्ड एक्ट व नियमावली 22 जुलाई 2016 के मुताबिक होगी।
प्रबन्धक

आवश्यकता है

आवश्यकता है।
मदरसा कैफ़ी उल उलूम, मीरपुर, बाराबंकी
सो 30 अगस्त-02 पद, आयु न्यूनतम 22 वर्ष, शैक्षिक योग्यता फाजिल अथवा अरबी / फारसी / दीनियात / परम्परागत प्राच्य विषय में न्यूनतम 50 प्रतिशत अंकों सहित स्नातकोत्तर उपाधि तथा मुंशी / मौलवी कक्षाओं का न्यूनतम दो वर्षों का शैक्षणिक अनुभव। परन्तु अरबी / फारसी / दीनियात दुसूरा उपाधि धारक के लिए अथवा प्रशिक्षित काबिल / प्रशिक्षित स्नातक इसके साथ आलिम अथवा उर्दू से इण्टर का प्रमाण-पत्र भी आवश्यक है। पुनरीक्षित वेतन मैट्रिक्स लेवल 7 में वेतन 44900-142400
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प्रबन्धक



NOTICE

Army No. 13990599.N Nayak Mahesh Chandra Trivedi is Residential of 24.C Kamla Nagar Collectorgang Post, Tehsil & Distt. Fatehpur (UP). The applicant's date of birth on Army's son certificate 18.02.2011 but in civil forms it's written as 18.12.2011 that is true.

NOTICE

Be it known to all that my name SHUBH KUMAR is registered in my School Certificate which is wrong. As per adhar Card my correct name is SHUBH KUMAR SRIVASTAVA, In future I shall be read and write as SHUBH KUMAR SRIVASTAVA. SHUBH KUMAR SRIVASTAVA S/o Late Deepak Kumar Srivastava, R/o Type-Ist, 240, Police Line, Prayagraj.

OBITUARY

OBITUARY

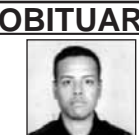


SEYO KORIMAYUM ABDULLAH
04 FEB 1993 - 22 APR 2022

ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF SEYO KORIMAYUM ABDULLAH WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH BASE HOSPITAL DELHI CANTT.

FROM: LT GEN SANDIP MUKHERJI
AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

OBITUARY

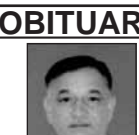


NAIK BISWAJIT KUMAR DAS
28 MAY 1990 - 18 APR 2022

ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF NAIK BISWAJIT KUMAR DAS WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH 158 BASE HOSPITAL.

FROM: LT GEN SANDIP MUKHERJI
AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

OBITUARY



SUBEDAR HADIYAL HAREESH SAVJI
16 AUG 1973 - 05 JUN 2022

ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF SUBEDAR HADIYAL HAREESH SAVJI WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH MILITARY HOSPITAL JABALPUR.

FROM: LT GEN SANDIP MUKHERJI
AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

Dubey appointed RLD's national spokesman

Lucknow (PNS): Rashtriya Lok Dal leader Anil Dubey has been appointed national spokesman of the party.

Earlier he was holding the post of national secretary of the RLD.

Dubey, who is a senior leader of RLD, was elevated to the post of national spokesman on Tuesday by party chief and MP Jayant Chaudhary. He is one of the six national spokesmen that RLD appointed on Tuesday.

In a welcome ceremony held at the party office in Lucknow, Dubey expressed gratitude to RLD supremo Jayant Chaudhary for his appointment.

The newly-appointed party spokesmen have been asked to remain active on social media, including Twitter, to spread the party ideology and policies and to keep themselves attuned to the youths and their problems.

Earlier, the RLD workers and leaders welcomed Dubey in the function.

Congress faces worst phase in parliamentary history as its lone member in Council retires

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Going through its worst phase, Indian National Congress faces yet another major setback as for the first time the oldest political outfit of the country will have no member in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council.

Deepak Singh, the lone Congress member in the UP Legislative Council retired on Wednesday.

In the last UP assembly elections, Congress was confined to just two seats.

Not only Congress Bahujan Samaj Party will now have just one member each in both the Houses of the UP legislature as three of its members in the council completed their terms on Wednesday.

A total of 10 members retired from the UP Legislative Council on Wednesday, including Jagjivan Prasad, Balram Yadav, Dr Kamlesh Kumar Pathak, Ranvijay Singh, Ramsunder Nishad and Shatrudha Prakash of the

Samajwadi Party (SP). Apart from this, the tenures of BSP MLCs Atar Singh Rao, Suresh Kumar Kashyap and Dinesh Chandra also ended on Wednesday.

The tenures of two MLCs of Bharatiya Janata Party also ended on Wednesday. However, these two BJP members have been elected to the council again. The two members are Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya and Panchayati Raj Minister Chaudhary Bhupendra Singh.

The legislative council was formed in Uttar Pradesh, then United Provinces, on January 5, 1887 and its first meeting was held on January 8, 1887 at Thornhill Memorial Hall in Allahabad. Then it used to have nine members. Under the provisions made in 1909, the number of members was increased to 46, which included 26 non-official members. Of these members, 20 were elected and six were nominated. Motilal Nehru took the membership of the legislative council

on February 7, 1909. He is considered to be the first member of Congress in the legislative council. However, he resigned in 1920 under the policy of non-cooperation with the Congress government. UP was then known as the United Provinces.

After independence, till 1989, the leader of the house in the legislative council was from Congress, with the exception of 1977 and 1979 when this post was with Janata Party.

In the last 33 years, the Congress strength has been shrinking in the UP assembly. In the assembly elections held this time, Congress reached its lowest position in terms of number of members. Only two MLAs of the Congress won and got less than 2.5 per cent votes. This was bound to have an effect on its membership in the UP Legislative Council.

In view of the current circumstances, hope of Congress representation in the upper House of UP Legislature is a distant possibility.

Temples not just centres of faith but also symbols of national unity: Yogi

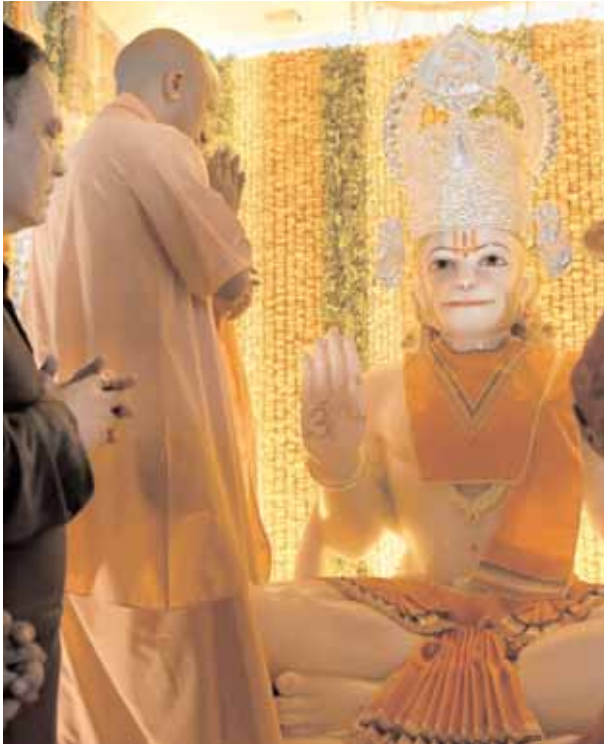
PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Our temples are not only centres of our religious faith but also the symbols of national unity. These temples are also a medium of public welfare and it is important to carry this tradition forward.

These views were expressed by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at the 'pran pratishthan' of the statue of Lord Hanuman at the Hanumant Dham Mandir near the bank of river Gomti on Wednesday.

The chief minister said that the look of the temple from outside itself showed that it was an old temple and had been given a new shape.

Recalling that a Communist thinker was once asked to comment on the religious places of the country, Yogi said, "The Communist thinker said that religious faith was a personal issue but when we talk in terms of India then what unites the people in the diversity that prevails in the country are the temples of India. The communist thinker also gave the example of Adi Shankaracharya and said that all those people who said that India was a not a country but a collection of states should know that Adi Shankaracharya, who was born in the state of Kerala, established four peeths in the four corners of the country and all the different princely states did not interfere in this as politics never restricts the path of religion but contributes in the conservation of temples. All the four peeths of Adi Shankaracharya are the



four jyotirlingas of the country and there are 51 Shakti peeths in the country," he said.

The chief minister said that if a person visits a temple in the country then his caste, creed and religion, area and language is not looked into. "If a person enters a place with a lot of faith, he gets the fruit of his labour also which has been the belief of the country," he said.

The chief minister said that if a person coming to the temple was given something to eat then nobody would remain hungry in the country. "This work of feeding the people has

been taken up by the state governments later but it was done by temples earlier and the bhandaras were held so that anyone walking on the road could get something to eat. "This kind of arrangement has been going on since the beginning of the ancient times," he added. Yogi Adityanath said that the country had faced the problem of COVID-19 which was the biggest pandemic of the century.

"Earlier, whenever pandemics hit the country there used to be deaths not only during the pandemic but also post the pandemic because of starvation. This is the first time that in the entire country, under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, programmes were organised and people were saved from novel coronavirus and there was no death because of hunger," he said.

The chief minister said the programmes of the state government were successfully carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic with the help of the people's representatives and also various organisations.

"This battle against novel coronavirus was the battle of 135 crore people of the country and when the entire country fought the disease unitedly, what was highlighted was that the COVID-19 management of the country was the best in the world," he said.

The chief minister said that free ration was given by the Central and the state governments but in the past free food was only given by the religious places.

"This is what my guru would always say that anyone coming to the temple should not go hungry and should be given two square meals also," he said.

Yogi said that it was also important to see that no garbage from the temples was dumped in the rivers and people should take up the task of cleaning the river and making it clean. "Medicinal plants can be planted on the banks of the river and work can be taken up for eradication of diseases. If this work is carried out by the temple management, the utility of the temple will become a reality," Yogi said.

Kakori Inspector shunted out for laxity

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Inspector Kakori, Jitendra Bahadur Singh, was shunted out following a complaint about laxity and not responding to the distress call of two girls who were being stalked by miscreants on Wednesday.

The girls had stopped going to their school due to fear that the miscreants would attack them and may harm them.

Their ordeal started the day the miscreants forcibly stopped them on the way to their home in the night on June 25. The miscreants, who were riding a motorcycle, made a bid to kidnap the girls by forcing them to sit on their motorcycle and later pushed them down. The girls fought with the miscreants and also took the mobile phone of one of them.

On the day of the incident, the accused fled the scene as the crowd converged but the police did not reach the spot.

Later the girls dialed 1090 women help line and were advised to file a complaint with the Kakori police. The victims lodged a report and also gave the mobile phone which they had snatched from one of the accused.

Despite the corroborating evidence, the police sat on the case. This demoralized the victims and they stopped going to their school fearing attack by the miscreants.

The news was leaked later among newsmen and the senior police officials came to know of the laxity of Inspector Jitendra Bahadur Singh who was asked to explain his point and was removed from his post after he failed to submit his reply.

A police spokesman confirmed the removal of the inspector.

DROWNED: Two youths drowned in the river Gomti in Bakshi Ka Talab police station area while one of their friends is still untraceable.

A group of nine youths from Vikas Nagar had gone to Ramghat bridge near Chandrika Devi temple to celebrate the birthday of their friend on Tuesday.

Reports said one after one they jumped into the river to take a dip and three of them drowned.

On a distress call, a police team along with divers reached the spot and started a search drive.

On Wednesday, the police recovered the bodies of two youths identified as Aditya and Abhishek while their friend Sumit Gautam was still untraceable.

Red coloured mangoes attract visitors at Aam Mahotsav

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Red colour varieties of mangoes are attracting visitors at the Aam Mahotsav in a big way.

The Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture, Lucknow is actively participating in the Aam Mahotsav 2022. The CISH has displayed 211 mango varieties and hybrids.

"The showcasing of mango includes several commercial varieties, released mango hybrids, farmers' varieties, exotic varieties and hybrids under evaluation which will be future mango varieties," said CISH Director Neelima Garg.

She said that Ambika and Arunika developed by ICAR-CISH were very high in demand among the farmers and lots of farmers had already planted them in their field.

Both varieties were the point of attraction in Mango Competition during Aam Mahotsav. Motichoor, Rogini Zarda, Kharbujia, Chhattisgarh Nandiraj, Hardil Azeez, Nazuk Badan, Pahilwan, Kuzza Seri, Bhadaiya Gola, Alif Laila, Afem, Bir Pasand, Dalima, Larankoo, Elaichi, Lahutia etc. are some of the varieties attracting the visitors in the Aam Mahotsav," she said.

Garg said that 30 mango based products, including pulp, squash, bar, pickle, wine, vinegar, ketchup, ply, oil, face scrub, skin cream, lip balm, capsule, tea, coffee, laxative, fibre etc. were also displayed in a separate stall. She said the mango harvesters and CFB boxes were also on display.

Meanwhile, the mango display at the mango exhibition is

enhanced by the unexpected beauty of red mango fruit. There were only about a dozen different coloured varieties on display about three decades ago, but now there are hundreds. Exotic and Indian varieties of mangoes with vibrant red peels are on display at the mango exhibition.

Mango varieties with red skins are becoming increasingly popular, according to Dr Shailendra Rajan, former director of Lucknow's Central Institute of Subtropical Horticulture and a mango variety exhibitor for 36 years.

"Everyone is attracted to red mango fruits, and only Indian coloured varieties such as Husnara, Vanraj, Surkha, Surkha Verma, Siduriya and Mussarat Shah were displayed in mango fairs a few decades ago. Coloured varieties such as Tommy Atkins, Eldon and Sensation were imported from the United States in the 1980s by the CISH Lucknow and the Indian Agriculture Research Institute in New Delhi. Plants of this variety are widely distributed by various government agencies and private nurseries," he said, adding that this had given rise to plantations of exotic varieties.

"These varieties were also used as parents while developing new varieties. Coloured hybrids were developed by crossing these exotic mangoes as male or female parents with Indian varieties such as Amrapali, Dashehari and Alphonso. Exotic coloured mango varieties such as Tommy Atkins and Sensation have a flat taste and do not suit the Indian palate. Aromatic and sweet mangoes are popular

among Indian consumers. However, the colour of these varieties attracts the consumer, and the price is felt to be reasonable. These varieties are typically less sweet, but they can be stored for a longer period of time," he said.

The research organisations have developed a good number of red coloured varieties. Dr Rajan stated that he was instrumental in the development of Ambika and Arunika at CISH, Lucknow for 36 years of mango breeding work.

Dr Rajan said that the demand for Ambika and Arunika had increased dramatically due to their dwarf nature and ability to be accommodated in the kitchen garden.

"Arunika is smaller than the Ambika, which is regarded as one of the best dwarf varieties for the kitchen garden. Initially, plants of new coloured varieties were only available at the institute where these varieties were developed, but due to high demand, plants are now being multiplied and made available through private nurseries as well. However, the practice of supplying spurious varieties under the guise of coloured varieties is also prevalent" he said

Dr Rajan said that it was also profitable for the farmers to produce coloured varieties because of the high market demand for the red fruits. "These cultivars can be planted in high densities and will start bearing fruit in just two years. Pruning has a strong effect on Ambika and Arunika trees, so trimming the branches and harvesting the mango crop each year is an option," he added.

Pathak inaugurates clinical neurophysiology lab

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The newly constructed clinical neurophysiology lab at Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences was formally inaugurated on Wednesday by Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak.

This lab has the facilities for various investigations required for patients with brain, spinal, veins and muscular disorders.

A senior doctor said that video electroencephalogram and transcranial doppler would be done at the lab for evaluation and treatment of various neurological disorders.

"Video electroencephalogram plays a very important role in surgery in 15-20 per cent patients with epilepsy who do not recover with medication. Besides, patients with nerve disorders also need to undergo various tests for diagnosis of various types of muscular dystrophy and myopathy," he said.

He pointed out that patients with headaches were treated with magnetic stimulation without any medication.

"Transcranial doppler (TCD), which is used to detect medical problems that affect



Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak inaugurating the neurophysiology lab at Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences on Wednesday

blood flow in the brain, is also being done in the clinical neurophysiology lab," he said.

The deputy chief minister also inaugurated a 1000 LPM (litre per minute) capacity oxygen PSA plant which was

donated to the institute by Doctors For You. The expenditure for supply and installation will be borne by the non-governmental organisation. This plant works on PSA (pressure swing absorption) technique, by which 93 per cent to 94 per cent pure oxygen is obtained from air. Then it is transported to the patients admitted in the hospital through a central pipeline system.

SGPGIMS Director Prof RK Dhiman welcomed the deputy chief minister and thanked him for gracing the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, the minister appreciated the work culture at SGPGIMS for treating every patient with utmost care and empathy. He equated medical institutes with temples and doctors as 'god'.

"At times, availability of beds may be a problem, but beds are being increased in phased manner," he said."

He assured the staff of timely resolution of their grievances.

A memento was presented to the minister by the director.

Dr Rajat Jain, president of Doctors for You which has donated the PSA oxygen plant was also felicitated with memento.

CITYBRIEFS

FAREWELL

The farewell ceremony of Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation's Managing Director Kumar Keshav was held at Transport Nagar Metro Depot. Acting Managing Director Sushil Kumar, Director (Rolling Stock) Atul Garg, Director (Finance) Sheel Kumar Mittal and senior officials of UPMRC attended the farewell. It was an emotional evening as the officials shared their experiences and fond memories they shared with Kumar Keshav and walked down memory lane reminiscing how a company that started with a team of five had become a world class organisation today. Acting Managing Director Sushil Kumar, who has had a long association with Kumar Keshav, took the opportunity to express gratitude towards him for his relentless motivation and active involvement in every aspect of UPMRC projects and operations.

COMBINED ANNUAL TRAINING

On the second day of Combined Annual Training Camp-218 organised by 64 UP Battalion NCC at 1 Military Training Battalion

of AMC Centre and College, cadets practised yoga and take part in the drill sans weapons. In the camp, information was given to the cadets through lectures on leadership by second officer Nawaz Ahmed, Lt. Vinod Kumar Verma, Lt. (Dr.) Prashant Singh and third officer Purti Srivastava. Apart from this, the cadets were briefed about the handling and firing positions of the 7.62 mm rifle.

CMS

Shilpi Agarwal, a teacher of International Cambridge Section of City Montessori School, Gomti Nagar Campus II, has topped in the CENTA Teaching Professionals Olympiad. She has secured the 1st rank nationally while finished 9th in overall rank. She was won the combined cash prize of Rs 45,000.



Video Surveillance System to enhance security of rly stations

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The RailTel has finalised the agencies to execute the installation work of Video Surveillance System (VSS) at major railway stations. The project is being carried out under the Nirbhaya Fund by Indian Railways and RailTel.

The first phase of the project will cover 756 major railway stations of category A1, A, B, and is likely to be completed by January 2023. In order to enhance the safety and security of the passengers at railway stations, Indian Railways is in the process of installing Internet Protocol (IP) based VSS system at waiting halls, reservation counters, parking areas, main entrance/exit, platform, foot over bridges, booking offices. Once the system is installed, the IP-based CCTV cameras will be able to send the video feed automatically to local RPF posts and at a centralised CCTV control room at divisional and zonal level.

The system comes with an artificial intelligence (AI) enabled video analytics and facial recognition software, which will trace down the known criminals and trigger an alert at the same time at station premises.

Moreover, network management system (NMS) will also be provided for monitoring of cameras, servers, UPS and switches, which will be accessible from any web browser by authorised personnel.

Three members of a family, including minor girl, commit suicide in Agra

Lucknow (PNS): In a shocking incident in Agra, three members of a family, including a minor girl, were found hanging in their house on Wednesday morning.

All the three allegedly committed by suicide.

A suicide note was also recovered which pointed poverty as the reason for the decision of the deceased to end their lives. The police, however, did not share the suicide note with media persons and claimed to be matching the handwriting of the suicide note with that of Sonu Sharma.

The deceased were identified as Sonu Sharma (38), his wife Geeta Sharma (35) and 8-year-old daughter Shrishti.

The 10-year-old son of the

family, Shyam, is the sole survivor. The bodies were sent for post-mortem.

According to family members, Sonu had married Geeta about 15 years ago and lived separately in the Awas Vikas Colony. About six years ago, Sonu met with an accident and then started working in his father's business. He stopped working when the COVID-19 pandemic set in and was living in his parent's house. His parents used to bear the expenses of his family and Sonu had discontinued the education of his children.

Sonu's mother informed the police that her grandson, Shyam, came to the house on Wednesday morning and refused to go back. When

asked, he said that his father, mother and sister were hanging by a rope.

"We went and saw them hanging after which we informed the police," she said.

A police official said that the son was not talking about the incident. It was intriguing that he was not a part of the suicide pact. Sonu's brother-in-law Vijay Kashyap also lives in the same locality.

Senior Superintendent of Police of Agra, Prabhakar Chaudhary, said that a suicide note written in a very emotional manner was recovered from the spot. He said the deceased was unemployed for the past many months and the three (husband, wife and daughter) seemed to have jointly decided

to end their lives.

Further investigations are on in the matter.

Meanwhile, a junior resident doctor allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself in Lala Lajpat Rai Medical College in Meerut.


Reports said that a second year student of radiology department, identified as Monica Dubey, hanged herself in her room in the girls' hostel sometime late Tuesday night. Her body was found hanging by her colleagues on Wednesday morning.

Monica Dubey was married and had returned to Meerut from her home in Allahabad two days ago. Her colleagues failed to give any immediate reason which forced

the young doctor to end her life. The body was found hanging from a ceiling fan in the hostel room and the room was locked from inside. At present, the police are waiting for the post-mortem report.

Monica Dubey's acquaintance and her husband were also being questioned to find out the reason for the extreme step taken by the resident doctor. A case was registered in this regard. In another incident reported from Ballia, a man committed suicide by jumping in front of a train, allegedly after being upset with his wife.

Both the couple had some differences over domestic issues and hurled abuses on each other, the family members claimed.



सेन्ट्रल बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया

Central Bank of India

Jewels Auction

Notice

Regional Office:

73, Hazratganj, Lucknow

1911 से आपके लिए "केंद्रित"

"CENTRAL" TO YOU SINCE 1911

Bank has decided to conduct open auction for the under mentioned jewels		Central Bank of India Bani Branch, Lucknow, Phone 8303713761 & 9415417775 E-Mail: bmluck5117@centralbank.co.in			
Inspection of jewels and time		Date: 13.07.2022, between 10.00hrs. to 12.00hrs. (during branch working days)			
Date & Time of Auction		Date: 15.07.2022 @ 14.00hrs. to 16.00 hrs.			
S. No.	Description of Ornaments	Gross Weight in Grams	Net Weight in Grams	Reserve Price in Rs	EMD Price in Rs
01.	Necklace 1 Pc. Of Gold	10.00	7.50	37466.25	4000.00
02.	Mangalsutra 1Pc. Of Gold With Glass Beeds	23.240	13.680	68338.44	6500.00
03.	Bracelet 1 Pc. Of Gold	19.640	14.730	73583.72	7400.00
04.	Chain 1Pc. Of Gold	12.020	9.010	45009.46	4600.00
05.	Ring 6Pcs. & Nose pin 1Pc. Of Gold	14.170	10.630	53102.17	5400.00
06.	Jhumkee 2 Pcs. Of Gold	7.100	5.330	26626.02	2700.00
07.	Churi 4 Pcs. Of Gold	27.380	20.540	102607.60	10300.00
08.	Necklace 1 Pc. Of Gold	41.590	31.190	155809.60	15600.00
09.	Tika 1 Pc. Of Gold	4.600	3.450	17234.48	1800.00
10.	Ear Rings 2 pcs of Gold	4.860	3.650	18233.58	1800.00
11.	Necklace 1 Pc. Of Gold	9.050	6.790	33919.45	3400.00
12.	Chain 1Pc. Of Gold	12.300	9.230	46108.47	4700.00
13.	Bali 2 Pcs. Of Gold	1.890	1.420	7093.61	750.00
14.	Payal 2 Pcs. Of Silver	217.00	141.00	8206.20	900.00
15.	Hathphool 2 Pcs. Of Silver	98.00	64.00	3724.80	400.00
16.	Payal 2 Pcs. Of Silver	107.00	70.00	4074.00	450.00
17.	Petti 1 Pc. Of Silver	237.00	154.00	8962.80	900.00
18.	Bichiya of Silver	46.00	30.00	1746.00	200.00

Important terms and conditions

1. Bank will accept EMD/s upto 13.30hrs only until the date of auction,

2. The Reserve Price may fluctuate as per Gold Rate of the Auction date. The Reserve Price of the Ornament will reduce 3% from the Gold rate of the Auction Day

3. Successful bidder has to remit the entire sale/quoted/bid price before 4.00 PM of auction date and to take delivery of the jewels at his own risk and responsibility,

4. Quality and quantity of jewels should be verified by bidders only and bank will not held responsible for the same thereafter

5. Bank reserves its right to hold/cancel the auction partly or fully without adducing any reason,

6. Submission of photo and address proof to Bank by proposed bidders and Bidding forms are mandatory before commencement of auction itself.

7. For other terms and conditions please contact the bank at the under mentioned address.

8. GST should be borne by purchaser only.

Date : 07.07.2022 Place : Lucknow

Authorized Officer: Central Bank of India

SIT arrests two more accused

PNS ■ KANPUR

Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing the anti-Sikh riots of 1984, has arrested two more accused from Yashoda Nagar locality late on Tuesday night. Earlier, the SIT had already arrested eight accused involved in the riots from Ghatampur and Kanpur.

Around 2.30 am SIT raided around half-a-dozen hideouts of the absconding accused Raghavendra Singh Kushwaha (nephew of former state minister Shiv Nath Singh Kushwaha in Congress government) but failed to nab him. On the other hand, another team of SIT arrested two accused involved in anti-Sikh riots from Yashoda Nagar locality. On November 1, 1984, the irate mob, including these two accused, had barged into a house in K Block, Kidwai Nagar, and killed Shardul Singh and Guru Dayal Singh.

The probe of this issue was being carried out by Sub-Inspector Surya Pratap Singh. Addressing mediapersons, DIG (SIT) Balendu Bhushan said during late night raid police arrested Gopal Gupta alias Babbu Gupta and Jitendra Kumar Tewari of Yashoda Nagar. Both the accused will be produced in the court, he said.

After completing the investigation, SIT had started the arrest of accused from Ghatampur. In its first arrest, SIT had arrested Safullah, son of Sabir Khan of Shivpuri, Yogendra Singh alias Babban Baba, son of Surendra Singh of Jalala, Vijay Narain Singh alias Bacchan Singh, son of Shiv Narain Singh of Benda and Abdul Rehman alias Lambu, son of Ramzani of Benda. Thereafter, two more accused

were arrested from Ghatampur. The name of Raghavendra Kushwaha, also figured in the list of the absconding accused. Besides, in the Nirala Nagar massacre, SIT has so far arrested 11 accused and sent them to jail. Total 27 accused involved in this case were identified by the SIT.

HOSPITALISED: Farhan Solanki, brother of Samajwadi Party MLA Irfan Solanki, was admitted to a hospital on Tuesday after allegedly taking an overdose of sleeping pills.

On seeing him lying unconscious in his room, family members immediately took him to a private hospital in Sarvodaya Nagar and got him admitted there.

The cause of the incident is said to be an overdose of sleeping pills. Farhan's condition was stated to be stable by the doctors. Recently an FIR was lodged against Farhan for giving triple talaq to his wife after the intervention of the CM office.

He has also been accused of dowry demand and physical assault. Farhan's brother and his wife were also made an accused in the FIR lodged on the order of the Police Commissioner. According to reports, Ambreen Fatima, a resident of Defence Colony, was married to Farhan on March 25, 2009. In her complaint, Ambreen had alleged that soon after the marriage, Farhan was having an affair with a married woman.

When she opposed his move, he beat her up and started raising dowry demands. His brother Imran and his wife also allegedly supported him for his wrong deeds.

Officials inspect conduct of BEd exam

PNS ■ KANPUR

District Magistrate Visakh G Aiyer along with Police Commissioner, Vijay Meena, while inspecting the smooth conduct of the BEd examination carried out an inspection of the security arrangements and how and where the CCTVs had been installed and were functioning properly during the examination. Both then visited the control room to monitor how the work was going on in all the classrooms where the candidates were appearing for their examinations. The DM expressed satisfaction over the deployment of teachers and police force at the examination centres.

The DM and the PC visited the DG Girls PG College where they found that the examination had started on time and after proper checking of the candidates the college had allowed them into the



District Magistrate Visakh G Aiyer inspecting DAV College during BEd exam held on Wednesday.

examination hall. He also expressed satisfaction over the invigilation work of the teachers in each class where the examination was being carried out. The officials along with the examination superintendent and other teachers carried out inspection of all the rooms

where the girls were writing their BEd examination for the current session.

The DM then carried out a surprise inspection of the DAV College and visited the auditorium and the rooms where the examination was being conducted. He found that the teach-

ers had frisked the students before avowing them entry into the classroom. He then entered each class and checked how the students were seated and asked for the seating plan to identify if the examinees were sitting as per their roll numbers and in the same allotted room.

All the colleges where BEd exams were being held were directed to ensure that there was a control room and CCTVs were installed everywhere to monitor the students sitting inside the examination hall.

The district administration was on its toes and proper deployment of police force had been done at the centres, especially at entry points.

The BEd examination was being conducted at 42 centres and the first session was from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon while the second session was from 2.00 pm and 5.00 pm.

Seminar on GST return organised

PNS ■ KANPUR

Noted tax expert, Kanpur Income Tax Bar Association, Govind Maheshwari while addressing the seminar on 'GST return'

said in case of failure to timely file GST led to cancellation of registration but if the return was filed again then it would become functional. He said the new amendments in GST were quite cumbersome and could lead to blocking capital for quite some time. He said as a result the price of products will shoot up and said all businessmen having a turnover of Rs 2 crore had been exempted from filing GSTR 9 and 9A.

He said GSTR-9A was the annual return that was filed once in a year by taxpayers who opted for the Composition

Scheme under GST for a particular financial year up to FY 2018-19. He said it included all the information furnished in the quarterly returns filed by the composition taxpayers during that financial year.

Maheshwari said the GSTR-9A is an annual return that has to be filed by business owners who were part of the Composition Scheme. He said this return will include all the information that the composition dealers had provided in their quarterly returns during the financial year.

He said to file the GSTR-9 one must be a registered taxpayer under the GST with a 15 digit PAN based GSTIN. He said the aggregate turnover of one's business should be greater than Rs 20 lakh. He said the return applied to all registered tax payers under the GST

excluding those who had a Unique Identification Number (UIN) and non-resident tax payers.

He said one need to capture the details of all one's transactions at the invoice level for the entire year and this included intra-state and inter-state transactions, B2B and B2C transactions, transactions associated with exempted items, non-GST supplies and stock transfers between one's business locations that were located across different states. He said the GSTR 9 format collected a broad range of information about the taxpayer's inward and outward supplies, ITC, tax paid and other factors affecting tax liability for the year. Among those who took part were Shiv Mangal Jauhari, Santosh Kumar Gupta and Raj Kumar Gupta.

Murder case worked out

PNS ■ KANPUR

Police have worked out the murder case of the son of KESCO's retired employee and arrested six friends on Wednesday. The accused had lured him to Unnao and forcibly got the cash withdrawn from the ATM. Later, scared of being caught by the police, they killed him and dumped the body in a nullah in Rania of Kanpur Dehat. On being grilled by the police, all the accused have confessed to their crime. Govind Verma (25), son of senior clerk retired from KESCO Ramesh Chandra of Mainawati Marg, Nawabganj, had left the house on July 1 to attend birthday celebrations of his friend. Late in the night when his sister called him he informed in a fright-

GHS-IMR declared UP's 2nd best B-school

PNS ■ KANPUR

One of the premier management institutes of the country Dr Gaur Hari Singhania Institute of Management and Research (GHS-IMR) once again was declared as second best B-school in Uttar Pradesh and ranked 28th at the national level. The survey Top B School was conducted by The Academia Insights, which included the participation of more than 500 non-IMs category-based Management Institutions.

Director of the institute Dr Rahul Goyal informed that under the aegis of JK organisation, the institute was established in 1995 and was working in the area of quality management education. It had carved a niche for itself in the

niche market as well. The institute was already certified under ISO 9001:2015 certification bestowed to GHS-IMR by the United Kingdom-based 'Arcade Management Certificate' for meeting the requirement of Quality Management System for providing post graduate diploma.

Dr Goyal also briefed the media that in the preceding month also GHS-IMR had been conferred with the second position in Uttar Pradesh and fifth position in pan India ranking by the Grand Jury India Higher Education Rankings 2022-23 of Education World Magazine. He said the GHS-IMR clinched these higher positions by successfully meeting all the comparative metric standards of the Education World Magazine with flying colours.

DTO: Do not ignore stiffness, pain in bones

Varanasi (PNS): District Tuberculosis Officer (DTO) Dr Rahul Singh appealed to the people not to ignore stiffness and pain in bones because it may be bone tuberculosis (TB) which is also called musculoskeletal TB. 'TB mainly affects the lungs, respiratory system and digestive system but in some cases it can occur in any other part of the body except nails and hair. There are two types of TB, pulmonary TB and extrapulmonary TB. When TB spreads, it is called extrapulmonary tuberculosis (EPTB). One form of EPTB is also known as bone and joint TB. Bone TB also affects the joints of the hands, elbows and wrists, spine, back etc.,' he informed.

Citing an example of a 52 years old lady from Pahadia area who has been suffering from high sugar for many years, Dr Singh said that for six months, she was suffering pain in raising her one hand due to stiffness in the elbow. When she contacted a doctor, the latter advised her to control sugar along with prescribing some medicines but instead of decreasing, the disease kept on increasing. Along with the excruciating pain in the joints, she was not feeling hungry and her weight also started falling rapidly.



E-TENDER NOTICE

GUJARAT MARITIME BOARD

"Sagar Bhavan", Sector 10/A, Chh Road, Opp. Air Force, Gandhinagar 382 010

Phone 079-2323 8346/47/48/51

Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) invites E-tenders from the NABET accredited consultants for the following works:

Name of Work	
"Obtaining amendment in existing Environmental and CRZ clearance for Modernization of Navlakhi Port, District-Morbi, Gujarat"	
Details	
Bids downloading commencement Date	07-07-2022 from 15:00 hrs
Last Date for On-line submission of Bids through www.nprocure.com	18-08-2022 up to 18:10 hrs

Detailed terms and conditions and other related information is given in bid documents. For bid documents and more details, please visit website www.nprocure.com or www.gmbports.org or contact Deputy General Manager (Env), Environment Cell, Gujarat Maritime Board, Gandhinagar.

No/INF/VN/PN/2022/G/798

Awareness programme against use of polythene held

PNS ■ VARANASI

An awareness programme was organised by a social organisation in which the girl students took a pledge not to use single-use plastic and also to motivate others for the same.

The social organisation Subeh-e-Banaras held an awareness programme at a girls school in Bhairavnath area to generate consciousness

among students about the harm to the environment from the use of polythene and other identified single-use plastics. The girl students were also administered oath by the members of the organisation to boycott the polythene and other harmful plastics and also to motivate others for the same as it is harmful for the environment and atmosphere. The organisation also distributed carry bags made of jute.

The polythene and other single-use plastics are not only harmful for the environment but also hazardous for the health as the goods kept in these plastics become a cause of diseases, the members said, adding that was why, the government had banned the use of single-use plastics from July 1 last. They appealed to the people to use bags either of jute or cloth to carry goods. Mukesh Jaiswal, Dr Ashok

Kumar Rai, Dr Mukta Pandey, Anil Kesari, Nand Kumar Topiwale and others were present on the occasion.

CHANDRA LISTENS TO GRIEVANCES: Member, UP State Women Commission Archana Chandra on Wednesday listened to the complaints of the complainants at Circuit House, here. She settled some complaints on the spot and forwarded the rest of complaints

to the concerned departments directing for addressing on the priority basis. The maximum cases entertained by Chandra were related to the domestic dispute and she emphasised on sorting out such matters on the basis of mutual understanding. In the complaints related to the fraud in chit fund and land dispute she directed the concerned departments to address them in time-bound manner.



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NOTICE U/S 13(2) OF SECURITISATION & RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002 (HEREINAFTER CALLED 'ACT')

It is to bring to your notice that your loan account has been declared as NPA by secured creditor Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited having its registered office at D-305, Ground Floor, Sarvodaya Enclave, New Delhi - 110017 (herein after called 'SHDFCL') and you are liable to pay total outstanding against your loan to SHDFCL. You are also liable to pay future interest at the contractual rate on the aforesaid amount together with incidental expenses, cost, charges etc. Therefore, we hereby call upon you to discharge in full your liabilities to SHDFCL within 60 days from the date of this notice failing which SHDFCL will be empowered to exercise the power under Section 13(4) of the ACT. The details of borrowers and secured assets are as under:

S. No.	Loan Account No. Borrower(s) Name	Applicant Address	Demand Notice Amount & Date	Secured Asset
1.	OALB1904000005019304, OALB1705000005005875, Rajesh Kumar Kesharwani, Sonam Kesarwani	297 A, Meerapur Lalita Devi Mandir Allahabad Uttar Pradesh-211003	Rs. 4,59,860/- & Rs. 9,29,851/- & 28-06-2022	Arazi No. 163, Mauza- Mehewapatti, Paschim Uparhar, Partg. Arai, Tehsil - Karchhana, Distt. Allahabad Uttar Pradesh-212301
2.	OALB1906000005020701, Rakesh Kumar, Alka Gupta, Krishna Devi	70/164, Pandari Electronic Market Allahabad Uttar Pradesh 211003	Rs. 7,33,911/- & 28-06-2022	H.No. 70/164, Mohalla Pandariba Pargana & Tehsil Sadar Allahabad Uttar Pradesh 211003
3.	OALB1911000005024880, Sana Ulla, Mohd Samu, Raju	135, Muir Road Regal Guest House Allahabad Uttar Pradesh-211002	Rs. 6,52,325/- & 28-06-2022	Flat No.9, EWS (Ground Floor), Double storey, Katra Machhal, Bazar Housing Scheme, Fakhri Gari, Pargana & Tehsil- Sadar & Distt- Allahabad- Uttar Pradesh-211002
4.	OKAN2001000005026425, Sandeep Sahu, On Prakash, Munni Devi Sahu	Plot No. 19, Arazi 2039 Chachendi Sachendi Kanpur Near SVN Public School Kanpur Nagar Uttar Pradesh 209304	Rs. 4,21,883/- & 28-06-2022	Pvt Plot No. 19, Arazi No. 2039, Chachendi Sachendi 01, Kanpur Dehat Uttar Pradesh 208001
5.	KAN 1502_034275, Mohd Shamsad, Rukaiya Khatoun	62, EWS KDA Colony Jajmao, Uttar Pradesh-209871	Rs. 11,93,015/- & 28-06-2022	H.No 44/EWS Yojna 39 KDA Colony Jajmau NA Kanpur Uttar Pradesh-209871
6.	OKAN2002000005026834, Chandan Singh, Surbhi Singh	305, 1850, KDA Colony Arra Bingham Nambasta Shiyra Ram Vatika Kanpur Nagar Uttar Pradesh-226021	Rs. 6,11,511/- & 28-06-2022	Plot Situated at Part of Arazi No 206 mi, Mauza Bingham Kanpur Nagar Uttar Pradesh-226021
7.	OLKW1903000005011944, Poonam Devi, Dashedrh	Banwaha Sirkahpur Post Harpur Jagdishpur Sultampur Banwaha Uttar Pradesh-228171	Rs. 3,10,888/- & 28-06-2022	Plot Nos. 72 73, Part of Khasra No. 201, Kakauli Ward- Faizullaganj, Pargana, Tehsil District- Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226001
8.	OLKW1906000005000280, Akhtar Ali, Reshma Bano	24/94, Aziz Nagar Mohibullapur Sitapur Road Aziz Nagar Lucknow Uttar Pradesh-226021	Rs. 3,62,687/- & 28-06-2022	House at Plot No. 24, at Khasra No 94, M Rahim Nagar Dudaulli, Ward Faizullaganj Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226021
9.	OLKW1712000005009845, Deepak Kumar Pal, Vidyavati Pal, Pawan Pal	544/1751 Ekta Nagar Baraura H B Near Ambedkar Murti Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226003	Rs. 5,10,568/- & 28-06-2022	House On Khasra No. 448, 544/1751 Ekta Nagar Baraura Near Ambedkar Murti Lucknow-226003
10.	OLKW2001000005026164, Shri Karan Malik, Tilotama Malik	Sakshi Butique, Parag Road, Aashiyana, Lucknow Uttar Pradesh-226012	Rs. 7,22,428/- & 28-06-2022	House No. 584/066/1, Androon Abadi Gram/Mohalla-Qila Mohammadi Nagar, Ward- Raja Biji Pasi, Pargana Tehsil & District-Lucknow Uttar Pradesh-226001
11.	OLKW1906000005021042, OLKW1907000005021288, Mohd Shameem, Shaista Shameem	M 21, Shop No. 2, Basement Gole Market Mahanagar Chauraha Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226006	Rs. 7,48,230/- & Rs. 13,85,526/- & 28-06-2022	Shop No.02, M-21 Basement, Gole Market, Mahanagar Lucknow Uttar Pradesh-226001
12.	OLKW2006000005028118, Shakir, Jakiya Begam, Zakir	92, 95, Heeramam Ka Purwa Nagar Kanpur Uttar Pradesh -208807	Rs. 9,14,826/- & 28-06-2022	H.No. 127/1, Mohalla Rathkhana Ward Maulviyanj Lucknow Uttar Pradesh -226001
13.	OLKW1707000005007097, Sonu Kumar, Nilam Chaurasia, Shiv Kumar	Gungemau Harimau Amethi Jagdishpur Bareilly Primary School Sutanpur Uttar Pradesh-227809	Rs. 12,14,810/- & 28-06-2022	Part Khasra No.19, Baghamau Lucknow Uttar Pradesh-226001
14.	OLKW1705000005006048, Laxmi Sharan Awasthi, Harsh Narayan Awasthi	H No. 19/890, Indra Nagar Sec 19, Ring Road Pani Ki Tanki Lucknow Uttar Pradesh-226016	Rs. 15,31,822/- & 28-06-2022	Shop No. 03, With Land at Ismailganj Sector 15 Indra Nagar Yojna Kh.No. 30, Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226012
15.	LKW 1508_042481, Aja Prakash Upadhyaya, Lalita Devi	H No.- 1139, Raja Ji Puram Lucknow Uttar Pradesh-226008	Rs. 14,33,929/- & 28-06-2022	H No A5, at Plot No 42 & 43 Part Land of KH No 173 Bhaisorla Lucknow Uttar Pradesh-226001
16.	VRN 1411_029141, Rajesh Kumar, Deendayal Prasad, Usha Devi	SA 016/9, AK STR/ Mohalla Chakibeehi Ansh Uttar Pradesh 281202	Rs. 1,96,009/- & 28-06-2022	Plot No.- 45, Rio Mauza Chakvihli Pargana Shivpur Ward Samath Tehsil & Distt Varanasi Uttar Pradesh
17.	OVNR1911000005024699, OVNR1802000005011312, Sanjay Kumar Agrawal, Tanu Shri Agrawal	Indio Campus 13 Gulab Bagh Siga Big Bazar Siga Varanasi Uttar Pradesh-221002 & Lane No. 11, Gulmohar Apartment Flat No 45, Nirala Nagar Mahmood Ganj Varanasi Uttar Pradesh-221010	Rs. 14,36,169/- & Rs. 25,17,506/- & 28-06-2022	Flat No. 45, 4th Floor, Rudra Gulmohar Constructed Over SM Plot No. 93, Lane No.11, Nirala Nagar Colony, Mauza - Shivpurva, Pargana - Dehat Amanat - Ward Dashwamedh Varanasi Uttar Pradesh-221010

PLACE: GURGAON, DATE: 06-07-2022

AUTHORIZED OFFICER, SHUBHAM HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FINANCE COMPANY LTD.

Jaipuria School wins Gold Club Award

PNS ■ KANPUR

Seth Anandram Jaipuria School, won the Gold Club Award in the category of "Outstanding Service Towards Society." The award was presented by Rotary International District 3012 at Aabhar (The Gratitude), a District Interact Thanksgiving event, held at Amity University, Noida, recently. The school won the award for its contribution and hard work put into the club activities for the well-being of the community.

The award was received by Meenu Chandhok, Community Outreach Programme incharge, Seth Anandram Jaipuria School. Several eminent dignitaries attended the event, including Rtn Ashok Aggarwal, District Governor, Rtn Mukesh G. Gupta, District Interact Chair, and Suhasini Vats, District Interact representative. Addressing the gathering Chandhok said it was a personal belief that service to others was the rent one paid for the room here on earth. She said one can make most of this life by helping self but extending a helping hand to others even though it could be a drop in the ocean. She said such drops together made the ocean

Seth Anandram Jaipuria School, won the Gold Club Award in the category of 'Outstanding Service Towards Society.'

mighty, so full and beautiful. She said it was an honour to be the chosen one to be a part of the community outreach programme of the school and feel blessed and express gratitude to the school principal, co-teachers and the Interact Community of the school to support this programme with immense enthusiasm and compassion. She added that this award further motivated the institution to further ignite the spirit of community service among the students.

The Club bagged 300 points in the point scheme to receive the 'Gold Club Award.'

It was a proud moment for the school signifying the meticulous work of its members. Rotary is a global network of 1.4 million neighbours, friends, leaders and problem-solvers who envisioned a world where people work unitedly to create lasting changes across the globe, promoting the idea of community-serving, besides providing services to others. They also worked towards promoting integrity and advancing world understanding, goodwill and peace through the union of business, professional and community leaders.

Shehnai, metal crafts may get GI tag soon

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Shehnai and metal crafts of Banaras may get the Geographical Identification (GI) certification soon as prior to the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the city, the documentation of these two traditional local handicrafts has been completed and sent to GI headquarters in Chennai. Bharat Ratna Ustad Bismillah Khan and shehnai are synonymous with each other as he had the credit of making shehnai of

Kashi popular across the world. GI expert, Padma Shri Dr Rajni Kant, who has filed 126 GI applications from different states of the country so far, said that this will be a proud moment for Kashi. 'The GI applications for the famous shehnai and casting metal crafts have been sent to GI Registry, Chennai on Tuesday and it is the biggest gift of the PM on his arrival in Kashi,' he said, adding that the PM himself has mentioned Kashi's shehnai and Bharat Ratna Ustad Bismillah Khan many

times in his speeches and has praised him with pride.

He further said that if these two more items get the GI tag, they would also join the elite list of a few items under the intellectual property rights of the country.

'Casting metal crafts of Kashi also have a very ancient history as right from the ancient times coins to small metal figurines, pots of worship, Gangajal lota, kamandal, throne, metal nuggets including Banarasi dhante and bells have been famous.

'Zoonoses Day aims to raise awareness about zoonotic diseases'

PNS ■ KANPUR

World Zoonoses Day 2022 is observed on July 6 and it was an effort to raise awareness on zoonotic pathogens and how to control their spread. World Zoonoses Day commemorated the first vaccination administered against a zoonotic disease like influenza, Ebola and a few more. The day also remembers Louis Pasteur, a French biologist, who successfully invented the first-ever vaccine for a zoonotic disease rabies. The objective to observe World Zoonoses Day was to raise awareness among the people about the zoonotic diseases and teach them the methods to tackle the illness.

This was stated by Director of CSJM University, Director of Health Sciences, Dr Pravin Katiyar on World Zoonoses Day held on the campus on Wednesday. He said the theme of the day has been retained once again from 2021 which was "Let's Break the Chain of Zoonotic".

He said recently monkeypox had raised its head in a few countries and it was believed to spread from close contact with bodily fluids, such as saliva from coughing and the viruses can cause flu-like symptoms, but monkeypox also triggers enlarged lymph nodes and eventually, distinctive fluid-filled lesions on the face, hands and feet.

He said people should know the method to prevent and treat zoonotic diseases because if not handled well this illness can have a threatening impact on the human lives.

If the illness is not diagnosed then it can infect a large mass of people and can even cause death. He said thus zoonotic diseases not only spread through water, food and

'People should know the method to prevent and treat zoonotic diseases because if not handled well this illness can have a threatening impact on the human lives'

environment but also by the wild and pet animals. He said as per WHO guidelines people keeping pet animals in their homes should follow proper hygienic conditions and vaccinate them at regular intervals to prevent the illness. He said as per the reports of Centres for Disease Control and Prevention 70 per cent of the infectious diseases originated from animals and 60 per cent of the existing infectious diseases were zoonotic.

Dr Katiyar said people may acquire pet-associated zoonotic infections through bites, scratches or other direct contact of the skin or mucous membranes with animals, contact with animal saliva, urine and other body fluids or secretions. He said surveys and epidemiologic studies on the topic suggested that the occurrence of pet-associated disease was low overall and young children aged five and older adults aged 65, who were immunocompromised and women who were pregnant were at increased risk for zoonotic diseases and they may have more severe disease, and symptoms for a longer duration or may have more severe complications than other patients.

PM to give gift of ₹1,812 cr to Kashi today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Stage is all set for the first visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to his parliamentary constituency since the thumping win of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the assembly elections here on Thursday. During his stay, the PM will give a big gift worth about ₹1,812 crore to Kashi, while he will address a public meeting at Dr Sampurnanand Sports Stadium (Sigra) where final touches have been given to preparations on the eve of the arrival of Modi.

Modi will land at Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Babatpur by a special plane on Wednesday afternoon and then reach the Police Lines helipad in an Air Force chopper. From there, he will first go to LT College premises to inaugurate Akshay Patra, a centralised Kitchen, in the premises of LT College (Orderly Bazar) which has a capacity of cooking mid day meals for around one lakh students. Around 2.45 pm, the PM will visit the Rudraksh Convention Centre near Sigra Stadium to inaugurate Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam on implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP). Later, he will go to Sigra Stadium to address a public meeting and inaugurate/ lay the foundation stone of 45 projects worth about ₹1,812 crore.

Modi will lay the foundation stones of 13 projects worth ₹1,220 including development work of Sarnath Buddhist Circuit under World Bank aided UP Pro-Poor tourism development project, construction of Paavan Path for Asht Vinakaya, Dwadash Jyotirling



Night market under Lahartara-Chowkaghat flyover ready for inauguration by PM Modi.

Pioneer

Yatra, Asht Bhairav, Nav Gauri Yatra, tourism development work of five stoppages in Panchkosi Parikrama Yatra Marg and tourism development various wards in Old Kashi apart from Phase-1 of redevelopment works of Sigra Stadium.

He will also inaugurate 32 projects worth Rs 591 crore including Namoo Ghat, which will be linked with highways, waterways and airways and the PM will also flag off the operation of CNG boats in Kashi and for this, a floating CNG station has also been built on this ghat. Besides, Modi will also give the gift of a night market spreading 1.9 km below the Lahartara-Chowkaghat flyover where the art and culture of Kashi will be seen. The area has already

been decorated.

Meanwhile, elaborate security arrangements were made and under the guidance of Special Protection Group (SPG) officers, grand rehearsals of the PM's dummy fleet were held. The SPG personnel have already taken the command of all the places where during his visit the PM is scheduled to visit.

Apart from this, the Commissioner of Police (CP) A Satish Ganesh reviewed the security and traffic arrangements at a meeting with officers at the Police Lines. He also gave several instructions to the officers regarding security.

Besides, prohibitory orders under Section 144 CrPC have been imposed. According to ACP (Crime/Headquarters) Santosh Kumar Singh, the

orders have already come into the force from 6 am on Wednesday and it will remain effective till midnight on Thursday.

During this period, there will be a ban on the movement and use of drone cameras and legal action will be taken under Section 188 IPC against those who violate the rules.

Apart from this, traffic restrictions will remain effective for 11 hours from 9 am to 7 pm in the city on July 7. The vehicles will be stopped 15 minutes before VVIPs arrival and there will be diversion from the Police Lines, LT College (Orderly Bazar) to Rudraksh Convention Centre during the arrival of PM. However, ambulances and hearse vans will be free from restriction.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

RailTel has finalized agencies to execute for the work of Video Surveillance System (VSS) at 756 major stations, including 25 stations of North Central Railway.

The project is being executed under the Nirbhaya Fund by Indian Railways and RailTel. The Work is likely to be completed by January 2023.

RailTel, a Mini Ratna Central Government PSU under Ministry of Railways, entrusted with the implementation of Video Surveillance System (VSS) project (CCTV cameras network) under Nirbhaya Fund at Railway Stations has taken a major step by finalising the agencies for executing the job. First phase of the project will cover major stations of category A1, A, B, C numbering 756, and is likely to be completed by January 2023. The remaining stations will be covered in phase-2 of implementation.

Safety and security of passengers is one of the key focus areas of the Ministry of Railways. In order to enhance security at Railway stations which are major hubs of transportation, Indian Railways is in the process of installing Internet Protocol (IP) based Video Surveillance System at stations, that is, waiting halls, reservation counters, parking areas, main entrance/ exit, platforms, foot over bridges, booking offices etc. The Ministry of Railways has approved works for provision of Video Surveillance System over Indian Railways major stations under Nirbhaya funds.

Chairman and Managing Director, RailTel assured that with the finalisation of the executing agencies, the implementation of the project will be fast-tracked. The most modern software and hardware will be used in this project. The list of stations picked

up by RailTel include 25 stations of NCR. Two stations have been chosen from the Agra division of NCR-- Agra Fort and Raja Ki Mandi. Nine stations from Allahabad division and 14 from Jhansi division found place in the phase-1 list they are--Aligarh, Etawah, Fatehpur, Firozabad, Mirzapur, Phaphund, Shikohabad, Tundla, Vindhyachal of Allahabad division and Atarra, Babina, Banda, Chitrakutdham Karwi, Dabra, Datia, Dholpur, Gwalior, Khajuraho, Lalitpur, Mahoba, Manikpur, Morena, and Orai from the Jhansi division.

This VSS system will be IP based and will have a network of CCTV cameras. These CCTVs are being networked on optical fiber cable and the video feed of the CCTV cameras will be displayed not only at local RPF posts but also at a centralized CCTV control room at divisional and zonal level. The CCTV cameras of stations and video feeds will be monitored at these three levels to ensure enhanced safety and security at Railway premises. The system comes with Artificial Intelligence (AI) enabled Video Analytics Software and Facial Recognition Software which will help to detect known criminals triggering an alert when they enter station premises. Network Management System (NMS) has also been provided for monitoring of Cameras, Server, UPS and Switches which can be viewed from any web browser by authorised personnel.

Four types of IP cameras (Dome type, bullet types, Pan Tilt Zoom type and Ultra HD-4k) are being installed to ensure maximum coverage of the Railway premises. This will give an extra edge to the RPF officials for ensuring enhanced security. The recording of the video feeds form CCTV cam-

eras will be stored for 30 days.

The system implemented shall act as a tool to respond to situations/incidents effectively, aiding faster decision making and act as a great learning tool for better preparedness to meet any incident and eventualities with some software based applications like Video Analytic and Face Recognition, as per RDSO Version 6.0.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) enabled analytics software have the following features with a certain alarm and PoP UP view at the Operator end.

Intrusion Detection (People entering in Railway Operation areas); Camera Tampering; Loitering Detection; Human and Vehicle Detection; Search of Humans based on Attribute; Colour Search; Fallen Person; Combination Search (Human/Vehicle and Colour).

The VSS (CCTV) system shall capture face images from live CCTV video feed and generate alerts, if a blacklist match is found. FRS alerts should be pushed to the Video Management System/ NVR. (Seamlessly integrated with Video Management System /NVR). The VMS software will support Alarm Input monitoring and Output activation for the proposed IP Cameras. The VMS have the feature of mobile phones clients so that in case of any emergency, the authorised users can upload videos and snapshots to the local VMS server from the registered mobile phones, which should include identification of location. Operators at centralised locations shall have ability to view these alarms and playback video, if required, from stations. Operators at centralised locations shall be able to push the alarms to selected RPF/Thana and registered mobile phone of concerned security officers.

Two numbers of Panic Button are to be installed at each Platform. Once the Panic

Button is activated by any person in distress, an alarm shall appear on the VMS along with the pop-up of the associated camera on the operator workstation. In case, the associated camera is a PTZ type, the camera shall move and zoom on to the Panic Button to see the person in distress.

The recording of the video feeds from CCTV cameras of Stations will be stored in the nearest RPF Thana/Post for 30 days for playback, post event analysis and for investigation purposes. Important videos to be stored for longer duration at Data Centre (by using 240TB storage) and RPF Thana/Post by using additional 10 per cent storage (as per Railway's requirement).

For effective operations and management of IT Operations, an industry standard Enterprise Management System (EMS) has been provisioned for monitoring of VSS Equipment (Cameras, Switches, Server/Workstation, Storage, PC Workstations and UPS). Some of the critical aspects of EMS are as follows:- Centralised and Integrated Dashboard View; Centralised and Customisable Service Level Reporting; Server/workstation Change, Provisioning and Configuration; Network Automation; Service Management (Helpdesk) and SLA Management; Centralised IT Asset Inventory discovery and tracking; Server/Workstation Monitoring; Network Fault and Performance Management; and Penalty Monitoring and Management.

RailTel is a "Mini Ratna (Category-I)" Central Public Sector Enterprise under Ministry of Railways, is one of the largest neutral telecom infrastructure providers in the country owning a Pan-India optic fiber network covering several towns and cities and rural areas of the country.

Namami Gange activists perform Ganga aarti

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

To express their thanks to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi for giving a gift of ₹ 1,812 crore to Kashi, the activists of Namami Gange performed Ganga aarti at Dashashwamedh ghat on Wednesday. They also offered dughdhabhishek by offering milk into the river Ganga for seeking blessings of the Almighty to help Modi continue the process of all-round development in the city.

Regional (Kashi) convener of Namami Gange Rajesh Shukla said that the PM would inaugurate and lay the foundation stones of projects worth crores on Thursday. A necklace of 1800 crore pearls will be adorned in the form of devel-



Namami Gange activists offering Ganga aarti to greet PM in Varanasi on Wednesday.

Pioneer

opment in Kashi's neck,' he said, adding that we've prayed to Maa Ganga for this to adorn

the pearls of determination continuously. 'Modi has always been special in Kashi and will

remain so. The welcome tradition of Kashi has been soaked with culture and spirituality. We have wished for happiness and prosperity for the nation by performing the aarti of Maa Ganga,' he said, adding that the message has been spread that cleanliness is the basis of healthy life.

He also appealed to the people to follow the teachings of the PM by keeping the city, ghats and river Ganga clean and not to use polythene. He also praised Modi for helping the nation take a step towards self-reliant India. City co-conveners Sarika Gupta and Bina Gupta, Preeti Jaiswal, Pankaj Agrabari, Sangeeta Mishra, Sunita Devi, Nidhi Agarwal and many others were also present.

Idol of Maa Saraswati to be presented to Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be welcomed to his parliamentary constituency on Thursday with the angavastram of zardozi and the idol of Maa Saraswati of metal craft. Kashi is world famous for its craftsmanship and weaving and recently in the G-7 conference, the items of GI and ODO products were presented to the seven heads of the countries by PM Modi. Giving this information, GI expert Padma Shri Dr Rajni Kant said that the craftsmen of Kashi are excited today with the reaching of their traditional products to new heights. He said that local crafts-



Metal craft idol to be given to PM in Varanasi on Thursday.

Pioneer

men have also expressed their desire to present handicrafts and metal crafts idols on the

arrival of their MP and country's PM on July 7 and these items have already been handed over to senior officials of the district administration and Union Education Ministry. These items will be presented to the PM in two important events. At Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Samagam at Rudraksh by the Union Ministry of Education, an item of zardozi on light saffron Banarasi fabric with maroon colour silk will be presented to the PM, said Dr Rajni Kant, adding that these fabrics were made ready by young women craftsmen Tarannum and Rahnuma. residents of Lohta Chandapur.

Besides, a 15 inch high statue of Maa Saraswati of

Panchadhatu has also been presented to the General Secretary of Kaseria Mahasabha Manoj Singh by the state award winner craftsman Anil and the same will be presented to the PM under the guidance of Kaseria also at the Rudraksh Convention Centre.

Similarly, in the sports programme to be organised at Sampurnanand Sports Stadium, the PM will also be presented a zardozi item engraved with the logo of Khelo India.

The figures of various types of traditional Indian games with silk threads of different colours were woven by Shahana Warsi and Nagma, residents of Lohta.

Atala violence: Police investigating Pak connections of accused

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Police are investigating Pak connections on June 10 after Jumma Namaz violence in Atala area of Prayagraj.

Imran, arrested by the police in connection with Atala violence, uttered the name of Ammar of West Bengal, Ammar had circulated an inciting post from Pakistan on his WhatsApp group.

Youngsters from different Madaras are connected with Ammar through WhatsApp, and they got agitated after going through that post from

Pakistan and indulged in stone pelting, bomb hurling and arson on June 10, just a week after the Kanpur violence.

The police tried to locate Ammar through his mobile phone, but it was switched off.

Ammar was earlier a student of Jamia Hamidia, and his WhatsApp group has included a good number of students from different Madaras.

Now the police are trying to dig out the Pakistan connection of Ammar and his influence on the youngsters all over India, including Prayagraj.

PROPOSAL FOR ECO-

PARK CONSTRUCTION SENT TO STATE GOVT: A detailed proposal of developing an eco-park within the premises of Chandra Shekhar Azad Park had been sent to the state government. If the proposal gets a nod from Lucknow, an eco-park will be developed behind Allahabad Museum, situated within the Chandra Shekhar Azad Park.

Statues of wild animals will be installed in the park. The proposal included provisions of safety and amusement for children.

There is a huge piece of

land behind Allahabad Museum, and it will be utilised properly if the Government sanctions this eco-park.

There is also a plan to convert the nursery situated within Chandra Shekhar Azad Park into a botanical garden for medicinal plants.

Chandra Shekhar Azad Park was earlier known as Alfred Park or Company Bagh where the hero of freedom struggle Chandra Shekhar Azad was encountered by British Police. The pistol of Azad is kept for display at Allahabad Museum.

Gyanvapi case hearing may be held next week

PRAYAGRAJ (PNS): Hearing of Gyanvapi case at Allahabad High Court was deferred on Wednesday. This 31 year old case may be heard next week. The bench of Justice Prakash Padia did not sit on Wednesday, so the scheduled hearing of the case related to Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) survey at Gyanvapi mosque of Varanasi could not take place. The High Court has to decide whether the case can be heard or not. The court has already heard the Hindu party, and the hearing of the Muslim party was continued. The court had also directed the Government to let the court

know what they want to say. The Hindus claim that it was Vishweshwar Temple where Gyanvapi mosque was built. They wanted a thorough survey by the ASI. It may be mentioned here that a recent survey had opened a discussion whether it was a Shiv Linga or a fountain in Wazoo Khana of the mosque situated just in front of the ancient Nandi.

ROADWAYS EMPLOYEES GO ON FLASH STRIKE: Roadways employees went on a flash strike on Wednesday and parked buses in a zig-zag manner to block traffic in Civil Lines. The employees were agitated over the misbehaviour of

some advocates who had beaten up a driver.

NCR REALISES ₹ 52 CRORE REVENUE THROUGH TICKET CHECKING: In the first quarter of this financial year, North Central Railway has realised revenue of about ₹52 crore through ticket checking. As per tentative figures received, during the first three months of current financial year, Prayagraj Division realised ₹28.37 crore through ticket checking while Jhansi and Agra divisions earned ₹13.07 and ₹10.22 crore respectively. As the economy recovers from the pandemic, there has been a surge in all

activities which yield revenue to the government. Ticket checking is a dynamic activity performed in Railways in various forms. Most visible is the regular ticket checking by travelling ticket examiners (TTEs).

In addition to it, special checks are conducted like surprise check by flying squad, fortress check (in which the train is fortified from all sides by checking staff and passengers are checked for valid tickets), magistrate checks (it is performed in the presence of Railway Magistrate and offenders are tried accordingly), and ambush checks.

Phase 2 of Vedic Vigyan Kendra in BHU to be inaugurated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

With the financial support of the state government, the second phase building of the Vedic Vigyan Kendra (VVK) in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) is ready for the inauguration which is proposed to be done on Thursday by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. For the construction of this building, Rs 9.34 crore has been received by the Uttar Pradesh government. The building is located next to the building constructed in the first phase of VVK near

Vishwanath temple on the BHU campus.

In the second phase, the building was constructed in a total of four floors in which there is a large auditorium on the ground floor while there are one museum on the first floor, one Vedic planetarium and yoga auditorium on the second floor and three laboratory rooms on the third floor. The building houses various state-of-the-art laboratories including Vedic neurological and cognitive sciences laboratory, Vedic chemical and herbal testing laboratory, Vedic yogic sci-

ence laboratory and water purification laboratories. The university has nominated scholars of national and international reputation as members of the advisory committee of the centre, under whose guidance the centre is moving towards its goal.

After appointment to research related posts in the centre, the work will be started. All the academic and non-academic work of VVK is being done from the building constructed in the first phase. At present, three diploma level courses are being run in the

centre in which 70 students are studying, informed Assistant Registrar-cum-Administrative Officer Pawan Kumar Mishra.

SSU, IGNCIA SIGN MOU: Sampurnanand Sanskrit University (SSU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi to preserve the manuscripts for two years. The Manuscript Conservation Centre will function for two years and the SSU will get ₹12 lakh each year i.e. ₹24 lakh for two years under the MoU.

‘Work on to make plantation a public movement’

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Uttar Pradesh Minister for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and Khadi and Village Industries Rakesh Sachan while addressing the media on Tuesday said the government is committed to strengthening the environment and work is on to make the plantation a public movement. He said work had been taken by the government so seriously that for each district a minister had been made in charge to make the Van Mahotsav drive a success. A nodal officer from government level and another from

the Forest department had been appointed too. Giving details of the drive the minister said a target of 79,51,000 had been allocated for the district. He said after the completion of plantation the drive will be reviewed to know how much plants are alive and the reason if some could not survive. He appealed to mediapersons to become a part of the movement. Earlier the minister planted saplings of Harishankari category at Windham Fall park under the grand programme organised under the aegis of Forest department. MLAs Ratnakar Mishra and Ramashankar

Patel, MLC Shyam Narain Singh 'Vineet Singh', Principal Secretary and nodal officer Kalpana Awasthi, DM Praveen Kumar Laxkar, CDO Srilaxmi VS, SP Santosh Kumar Mishra, chief conservator RC Jha, DFO PS Tripathi and nodal officer of forest AP Sinha were present.

STRESS ON CONTROL-LING CRIME: Newly-appointed SP Santosh Kumar Mishra while addressing an introductory meeting with mediapersons at Police Lines on Tuesday said real policing will be intensified by him by taking the action against the criminals and maintaining law and order. On the issue of taint-

ed cops he said during inspection of police stations and outposts he will get a feedback and do accordingly. On the issue of crime against women he said even petty matters will be taken seriously and cases will be pursued to get the accused punished. He said not only the city but prominent places of the district too will be kept encroachment free for smooth traffic. About festivals like Bakrid and Kanwar Yatra the SP said he was getting a feedback and proper police arrangements will be made. He said all police officers, including SOs, had been asked to take steps to control crime.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Newsmen as news

The incident has brought the independence and integrity of several media houses under a cloud

The fracas between Chhattisgarh and Noida Police over detention of a news channel anchor is not a healthy development. The arrest preceded high drama at the anchor's house in Ghaziabad's Indrapuram on Tuesday morning. The Chhattisgarh Police had come to arrest him with a warrant for his alleged role in doctoring a video of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. The doctored video allegedly made it appear that Gandhi indirectly condoned the gruesome murder of the Udaipur tailor by a couple of jihadists. Around 6.15 am, the anchor reached out to the Uttar Pradesh Police and Government, including Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, through a SoS tweet, saying Chhattisgarh cops had reached his residence to arrest him without informing the local police. That brought Noida Police on the scene. Meanwhile, the news channel has distanced itself from the doctored video. It claimed in a police complaint that the *faux pas* happened "due to oversight and inadvertence". The company claimed that two employees have been dismissed. "In the given circumstances, the company has reasonable belief and suspicion that the aforesaid negligence and dereliction of duties may have been committed by (the producers) knowingly and intentionally in connivance with each other," the company said in its police complaint. Only a probe can bring out the truth, but the incident has given voice to sceptics who are increasingly questioning the independence and integrity of several media houses. There is nothing wrong in taking a political stand on issues, but when a media organisation — or some of its journalists — is seen as promoting the interests of a party, it ceases to be journalism; it becomes politicking, with all the attendant consequences. This episode should be seen as a lesson to the entire media: Nobody is outside the jurisdiction of the law of karma.

The political class should also realise that if cops are stopped or harassed when they are probing an interstate matter, the enforcement of law will be adversely affected. This happened in May in the case against BJP leader Tajinder Bagga. The Punjab Police wanted to arrest him for his "provocative statements and promoting religious enmity", but Delhi and Haryana police foiled the attempt. His tweets had targeted Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party boss Arvind Kejriwal. According to the Punjab Police, he was an offender who should be arrested, but this view was not shared by the police of Delhi and Haryana. Evidently, cops' understanding of the law did not correspond with what is written in statute books but to the interests of the politicians they report to. This is not the rule of law; this is the rule of men and women who occupy political offices. In effect, it becomes the tyranny of arbitrariness, hurting all sooner or later. When editorialists bemoan it, they are often ridiculed as dreamy moralists. But the law of karma also catches up with cynics, including journalists and politicians.

PICTALK



Farm workers plant paddy saplings at a field, in South Dinajpur

PTI

Double trouble

Peak summer conditions increase pollution levels and risk to environment, human health, economy

As the weather turns scorching and the wind speed picks up, pollution levels in the summer are supposed to be lower than in the winter. However, pollutants in the former case are more easily dispersed in the atmosphere thanks to the clear skies. The increase in dust particles brought on by building activity and vehicle traffic is the main cause of summertime pollution, experts aver. This summer, a case in point is that India not only faced increased heat but also more air pollution. A new report released on Wednesday stated that the Capital experienced increased summertime air pollution in 2022 compared to 2021, with the city's particulate matter levels significantly exceeding the normal limits. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) confirmed that the allowed levels for PM 2.5 and PM 10 in Delhi during the four summer months (March, April, May and June) this year were five times higher, according to an analysis by NCAP Tracker, a project of environmental organisations *Climate Trends and Respirer Living Sciences*. Interestingly, even abroad, in the Los Angeles region for example, the air quality significantly declined and remained dangerous after hundreds of Fourth of July fireworks displays lit up the skies there.

Due to the fireworks' high amounts of particulate matter and metal air pollutants, the South Coast Air Quality Management District issued a particle advisory for most of Southern California, from Los Angeles to the Coachella Valley. The South Coast Air Basin's fine particulate matter levels on July 4 and July 5 are routinely among the worst of the year. In addition to the fine particles already existing in the basin, mostly brought on by vehicles, fugitive dust and industrial pollutants, fireworks also contribute to smoke and combustion products. It has been well established that the summertime and a warmer environment can affect air quality in a number of ways, with a variety of negative effects on human health and economy. Extreme weather conditions, as well as both natural and man-made pollution, run the risk of worsening our air quality and having a variety of negative health effects as our planet's climate changes. Fortunately, we have some control. Environmental insights with a health focus help us see the year-round effects of invisible air pollution. With the correct knowledge, we can enable individuals to take responsibility for the air they breathe.

Of the fraction or the faction?

Till the Election Commission decides who deserves the symbol, the Shinde camp remains a faction; the Uddhav camp is nothing more than a diminishing 'fraction'

Though the mainstream media equates both the Shiv Sena groups with the same bulk of command over the splintered party, the fact remains otherwise. It is now clear that the bigger chunk has already been taken away by Eknath Shinde, and what is left over for Uddhav is a tiny and still-diminishing fraction.

Though the 'faction' has already formed the Government and passed the floor test, a deeper political crunch is still undergoing within the larger Shiv Sena Parivaar. The bone of contention and the fight for survival for both groups now concentrate on the most important question: Who will finally own the party and its symbol? This will continue till the EC takes the final call, deciding on who qualifies to be the owner of the Shiv Sena and its symbol.

Now, the saviours of either camp must be hectic in exploring all thinkable routes to conquer that technical-legal existential battle at EC by all means possible. In particular, the political legitimacy and the future course for both camps will be on tenterhooks till the EC spells the final word.

Principles for the EC: The opinion of experts shows the success of either group depends on the single available option to them — how they can successfully establish their majority before the EC. When the needle of the entire game sags to the evidence of majority, it is pretty evident that either faction must be trying hard to drag it into their favour.

The focused dynamics: The dynamics of proving the majority constitute the following parameters, and the precedents indicate that the EC will certainly examine into it. So, the EC will examine the support each faction enjoys within the party's organisation, in the legislature wing, in the top committees and decision-making bodies.

Most importantly, before deciding on these factors, the EC will certainly have to learn the Shiv Sena constitution for once. As this particular case goes, the most tangible parameter that the EC will take into account is the number of lawmakers and legis-



lators in each camp. And, in this case, the legislative wings necessarily consist of MPs, MLAs and maybe the count of MLCs if the EC wants to consider. Secondly, the EC will examine the strength of support that each faction enjoys within the party's organisational setups. Here, the EC may go a little further and ask both camps to produce the necessary evidence with documentary support.

The EC's discretion: Now, the ball is in the EC's court. When it is about a political party, the EC will certainly listen to all stakeholders, then whoever wants to be heard, and it will consider the pre- and the post-factual circumstances that led to the splintering. Here, the EC's power will be certainly at play. The Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968, gives it power to deal with the very issue. However, the EC's discretion will finally prevail and remain binding.

As far as the EC's discretion goes, it doesn't lack any restriction to decide in favour of one of the factions or neither of these. However, in this case, it can probably rule in favour of

“THE SAVIOURS OF EITHER CAMP MUST BE WORKING OVERTIME TO WIN THE TECHNICAL-LEGAL EXISTENTIAL BATTLE AT EC BY ALL MEANS POSSIBLE. IN PARTICULAR, THE POLITICAL LEGITIMACY AND FUTURE COURSE FOR BOTH CAMPS HANG IN BALANCE

one of the factions based on the real majority of support it enjoys both in the organisation and in the legislative wings. Then, it can keep the party symbol reserved for that faction in majority and may ask the other faction to register itself as a new political party with a different symbol.

Who is at advantage? As a recent precedent, a lesson can be drawn from the Samajwadi Party case where the father-son duo reached the EC to claim the party's symbol. Akhilesh won against Mulayam Yadav, evidencing that he not only commanded the Government but also the party.

In this particular case, the E-faction may also be considering to take over the party even before the EC steps in. E-faction has validated its majority in the legislative wings by establishing a fresh Government in Maharashtra, followed by winning the floor test in the Assembly. Now, it is for the E-faction then to confirm its majority in party organisation, particularly by bringing the Sena office bearers into its fold.

The final batting of the U-fraction: If certain people

break from the party, the anti-defection law comes into play. Under the law, whether it is one person or 100, the anti-defection law comes into application. Defection equates to the intended partition from the party and its membership; and at this very point, the U-fraction will surely stick to it. Nevertheless, on the disqualification issue, the only option is to knock at the Speaker's office. But then, it is rather unlikely that the Speaker would entertain such a petition.

New surprises: The total strength of Maharashtra Assembly is 287 and the majority mark is 144. The E-faction-led Government in coalition with BJP has won the floor test with 164.

Many independent MLAs are still roaming around the negotiation camps as dark horses. With Congress as well as NCP as the focal political contenders, the ruling faction on the edge may unfurl added surprises by breaking into their camp also.

(The author is Assistant Professor of Political Science in Mody University, Rajasthan. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GOVT-TWITTER FACE-OFF

Sir — The Government and Twitter have been at loggerheads over the new IT rules since May 2021 and even earlier. The long-running confrontation over content regulation has now entered a new phase with Twitter moving the Karnataka High Court against the Government's 'blocking orders' under the IT Act. The important question to ask is, if the Government orders Twitter to take down content in the absence of sound reasons, don't undermine the notion of freedom of expression. The paramount and inviolability of freedom of expression must be upheld. Twitter has a point — it finds the Government's 'recurring removal requests' too much of an interference in the company's affairs.

Sometimes the Government asks Twitter to not just block the posts, but take down the user accounts themselves without notice to 'content originators'. It is widely known that Twitter incurred the displeasure of the Government when tweets in support of farmers' protests and tweets critical of the Government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic found space on the platform. The threat to strip the social media company of 'safe harbour immunity' is a blatant attempt to put pressure on Twitter to fall in with the ruling dispensation.

G David Milton | Tamil Nadu

THE VALOUR OF J&K VILLAGERS

Sir — It speaks of the valour of villagers who overpowered two hardcore terrorists who were about to create havoc. The people of Reasi village deserve to be applauded for tactfully handling the case. This is a case of unarmed and untrained people capturing armed and trained terrorists. The announcement of cash reward of ₹5 lakh by L-G Manoj Sinha and ₹2 lakh by the DGP is welcome and the taxpayers' money has been put to best use. Reasi villagers have set a good example that they can also do what security forces can.

The nabbed terrorists were responsible for many terror incidents. The erosion of

Safety audit for aviation sector



Though India has one of the better air safety indicators in the world as compared to global average, recent several flight scares bring to the fore urgency of further strengthening air safety and need for a comprehensive safety audit in the aviation sector, airworthiness of aircraft, pilots' training and ground safety. Several recent incidents of midair troubles are scary and highlight the situation that requires urgent DGCA

attention. A Delhi-Dubai flight had to make an emergency landing at the Karachi Airport after it developed a technical fault midair with the malfunctioning of the fuel indicator; then there was a fire incident in the aircraft of Delhi-bound Patna flight while flying.

All this is a really dangerous and scary thing as there was risk to 185 lives but due to the pilot's skill and ability to navigate, despite the scary situation the aircraft landed safely. Though modern passenger aircrafts are built to operate even with one operational engine, it can sometimes result in catastrophe. The DGCA must put all measures in place for a robust air safety mechanism. DGCA should conduct a thorough investigation to find out the reasons for such incidents. Also, the airlines should give more attention to regular maintenance of aircraft and upgrading the training for pilots and air controllers. For a growing nation, air safety should be top priority.

Ramesh G Jethwani | Bangalore

30-year old terrorism in the Valley by security forces has been instilling confidence among people to live a peaceful life. Yet the terrorists want to prove that they are still around to create disturbance. The tribe of terrorists has perished to a large extent after security forces were given a free hand to deal with the situation. A Russian President once said: "It is for God to forgive the terrorists. But it is our duty to send the terrorists to God." Also, courts should harness their energy in deciding the cases of captured terrorists expeditiously.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

NEED TO SAVE AAREY FOREST

Sir — The rescheduled fifth Test of the Pataudi Trophy turns out to be a ding-dong battle. England playing at home was formidable and the toss favoured them to put Team India to bat first. As in the four Test matches last year, early wickets went cheaply and the rearguard action saw the teams

putting up a moderate total. After putting up 400-plus, India was in the driver's seat. England folded up for 284-plus and that gave them a handsome 132-run lead and consolidated their position.

With a score of 190 for 5, India dictated terms but the sudden rush of blood saw it losing remaining wickets for just 55 runs. That collapse in one session triggered the fear of losing and England started on a bright note and amassed 100 runs before losing the first wicket. Two more wickets fell and still resolute batting from Root and Bairstow saw the pair adding 269 runs, which saw the team sailing past the 10th highest target and thereby squared the series 2-2 in a convincing way. The absence of an off-spinner was felt when the left-handers and Root thrived for long. England applied an attacking policy and won.

CKR Nathan | Ghaziabad

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SOUND BITE

Domestic output of conventional and indigenous nano urea will totally replace the imports.



Union Fertiliser Minister —Mansukh Mandaviya

After all the sleaze, the scandals and the failure, it's clear that this Govt is now collapsing.



Keir Starmer —Britain's Oppn leader

My son is a rock star. My daughter is a chatterbox and a full-on momma's girl.



Actor —Shilpa Shetty Kundra

If we go back, if there's no rain in the first match, we could have won the series.



India's stand-in captain —Jasprit Bumrah

The BJP can do what it wants, but AAP won't let it sabotage democracy.



Delhi Chief Minister —Arvind Kejriwal

FIRST COLUMN

EDUCATORS TO DISCUSS NEP IMPLEMENTATION

The policy is focused on human values of Bharatiya civilisation



RAGHAVENDRA P TIWARI

Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Samagam, which will be held in Varanasi July 7-9, will be a ‘Maha Kumbh of Higher Education’. The core objective is to extract Amrut (nectar) from a number of quality imperatives enshrined in the National Education Policy 2020. The event will also mark the second anniversary of NEP 2020, which is aimed at making the youth future ready, while focusing on human values, life skills and traits of Bharatiya civilisation.

The event would take stock of gains made from the learning system of India and transform it to empower youth with ‘glocal’ competencies. Deliberations will be focused on mapping interests, abilities and demands of the younger generation for framing enabling rules for NEP 2020 on the basis of the objectives of ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’. Also, the event will re-visit and re-strategise already drawn pathways for the implementation of NEP 2020. A key thrust area will be to prepare for a holistic perspective for flawless implementation of NEP 2020. Educational luminaries will look at the ways to ensure speedy and effective implementation of NEP 2020.

In knowledge driven society, the quality of education system provides for economic vitality, health and overall well-being. NEP 2020 was launched on 29th July, 2020 with a view to transform the existing learning system and to actualise the needs of the 21st century learners. The seriousness of this mammoth assembly of Directors and Vice-Chancellors of the higher educational institutions can be appreciated from the fact that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself will inaugurate and address the gathering. Education Minister Dharmendra Kumar will remain present during the course of the event.



India can become Atmanirbhar only when we make our youth competent enough to contribute meaningfully and purposefully and become instrumental in the Industrial Revolution (IR) 4.0 by making use of disruptive digital technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, Intelligent Robotics, Big Data Analytics, Cloud Computing and so on. In IR 4.0, Cyber-Physical Production System (CPPS) is utilized for industrial production. Education 4.0 envisages co-learning, co-creation and innovation; anytime, anywhere, and any type of learning. Also, it calls for the use of flipped classrooms for transforming passive to active learning at home or outside, while institutions are used for skill-development. Besides, the thrust is also on personalized and collaborative learning, as lesson plans become creative, and continuous training ensures updation of domain knowledge and skills.

In nutshell, it can be said that Education 4.0 is outcome-based. Senior academicians and officials at the event will focus on the need to formulate policies to make youth future-ready to face a highly uncertain and volatile future. The speed of changes witnessed by the education sector is outpacing the ability of the existing system to respond adequately and appropriately. Indeed, the educational system faces the risk of becoming outdated if changes are not adopted.

Threadbare deliberations will take place on the student-centric and Bharat-centric reforms, with thrust on skill-development and employability, research, innovation and entrepreneurship, capacity building of teachers. Also, ways to ensure ranking and accreditation along with digital empowerment and online education will be discussed. Indeed, equitable and inclusive education within the Indian knowledge system will also be addressed.

The Ministry of Education and the UGC are burning midnight oil in making provisions/regulations on outcome-based learning with multi-disciplinary curriculum, while offering students multiple exit-entry options. Also, academic bank of credits and education in mother tongue/regional language at least up to primary level are among top concerns of NEP 2020. Emphasis will also be on shift in pedagogy, while learners will have to evolve to think like employees and employees will need to think like learners.

(The author is Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Punjab.)

NATO faces two-front geostrategic challenges

NATO needs to reimagine its role to defend two fronts, in Europe and the Indo-Pacific region



NISHTHA KAUSHIKI

The Chinese hegemonic intentions are visible from its deteriorating relations with the West and India, the growing tensions in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea, apart from the human rights issues in Tibet and the Xinjiang region.

Financial crises in Sri Lanka and Pakistan further worsen matters. In 2020, China replaced the United States as the EU’s largest trading partner. By 2021, Beijing had built 50 per cent of the total ships in the world. Through various mechanisms such as design collaboration agreements, cyber espionage, and acquisitions, China has copied advanced innovative ship designs, endangering the West’s future naval productions. In a nutshell, the world is witnessing China’s coercive policies in international politics and geo-economics, a deeply embedded civil-military fusion through espionage and dual-use production facilities, which raises sovereignty issues for several countries.

On the other hand, from the French President’s statement in 2019 that NATO is “brain dead” to the 2022 Russia-Ukraine conflict and the completion of the accession protocols of Sweden and Finland, the alliance has been reinvigorated with its new Trans-Pacific identity through the 2022 Madrid summit. The heads of the states of NATO’s Asian regional partners — Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea — attended the NATO Summit, a new development indicating the expanding horizons of Asia’s militarization to counter the Chinese hegemonic designs. The message stands clear, NATO is pivoting to Asia. The NATO 2022 ‘Strategic Concept’ minced no words to state that the “PRC’s malicious hybrid and cyber operations and its confrontational rhetoric and disinformation target Allies and harm Alliance security”. It strongly indicates that NATO now prioritizes the Indo-Pacific region. Before the 2022 summit, the foreign ministers of these four countries met at the North Atlantic Council (NAC) in December 2020 for the first time to push the emerging multilateral interoperability in the Indo-Pacific. This was in the backdrop of the “NATO 2030” expert reflection group that had labelled China as a “full-spectrum systemic rival, rather than a purely economic player or an only Asia-focused security actor.”

However, President Barack Obama was the first leader to foresee the Chinese threat and announced the “pivot” policy in 2011, while addressing the Australian Parliament. Further, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton penned an essay titled “America’s Pacific Century,” where she argued for a “strategic turn to the region”, which indicated relocating the US navy from West Asia to the South China Sea. The policy did not receive much attention, given the U.S. engagements in West Asia and Afghanistan. Nevertheless, today, the region’s shifting sands, whereby the U.S. has



NATO HAS FINALLY WOKEN UP TO CHALLENGES BUILDING UP IN EUROPE ON ACCOUNT OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSIONS, WHILE CHINA’S EXPANSIONIST ATTEMPTS HAVE ALARMED NEIGHBOURS IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

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snowballed the peace process through the Abraham accords and the Saudi-Turkey peace process, strongly indicate that the upcoming days in the Indo-Pacific will be highly turbulent. From another essential perspective, the militarization of the Indo-Pacific region would also provoke China and Russia to react, thereby offsetting the relative peace on Russia’s Eastern and Southern borders. Over the last few decades, Russia has adopted a relatively peaceful approach in the two directions to entirely focus on its Western front. The change in NATO’s strategy thus would be testing for the Sino-Russian friendship as Russia is more focused on Europe.

Nevertheless, the prelude to the new Cold War, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, has led to a consensus in Europe that it needs to view Russia as its primary geopolitical challenge. At the same summit, NATO also decided to increase its rapidly deployable troops by 300,000, apart from doubling or tripling to the brigade level in the Baltic States and five other frontline countries. Further, it plans to increase munitions and other supplies in response to Russia’s aggressiveness. This overhauling of the deployments would be complete by 2023. Currently, the defence spending of its members will increase by 1.2 per cent in real terms by the end of 2022. Simultaneously, as Europe intends to reduce its energy dependencies, a pertinent question that needs to be pondered over is, at the same point of time, what would be the proportion of financial and military commitments of NATO towards first, the European Defence, and second, the containment of

China in the Indo-Pacific region? Which objective would be a priority for the European countries? Can they counter two threats at the same time? The Ukraine-Russia conflict might continue for a couple of more months, if not years.

Moreover, what if China decides to invade Taiwan during the same period or creates crises in the Indo-Pacific region? It must be recalled that during the Russia-Ukraine conflict’s initial phase, France and Germany were reluctant to cut off their gas supplies. The future is hard to predict, and so are the sustenance levels of multiple military alliances. What then happens to the safety of allies in Asia is worth pondering. Thus, NATO needs to develop a genuinely transatlantic China policy in addition to the deployments in the Indo-Pacific, which might make China more reactionary and possibly provoke it to test the unity of NATO.

Three crucial issues emerge regarding South and Central Asia and the recent developments. First, attempts by Russia and China to expand their joint sphere of influence to include countries having an anti-American perspective, such as Iran and Pakistan. The emerging counter quad can present a formidable challenge to the West’s allies. Second, the destruction of the agricultural fertility of Ukraine will lead to increased demand for food grains. One of the most critical inputs for good agricultural produce are phosphates, the supplies dominated by China, which can be used as an essential geopolitical tool against the West via the supplier countries, especially in South and Central Asia. Third, the impact of the conflict would be the rise in the

earth’s average temperatures, particularly in the Arctic region; hence, melting the ice would be a new strategic issue. The opening of the new sea routes, especially in the arctic, would further bring the Indo-Pacific region to the centre of the gravity of the upcoming new conflicts.

India firmly believes in multipolarity and hence has its presence in China-led SCO, BRICS, and RIC apart from its strategic partnership in the Quad grouping. The multi-alignment policy of PM Narendra Modi has yielded positive results. As the militarization of Asia is imminent and there are increased chances of confrontations, the moment presents India with an opportunity to delicately balance hegemonic tendencies and democratic ideals without compromising India’s security and sovereignty. For this, it becomes essential that the country adjusts its budget to soon emerge as a self-reliant defence actor to maintain the strategic autonomy, failing which it might be sandwiched between the arms trade geopolitics of the West and Russia. Even for a couple of years, some hard decisions to divert financial resources towards indigenous development and emergency procurements of cyber and space capabilities is a must. On the flip side, we also need to evolve our policies in case the hegemonic tendencies pose an imminent threat. In such a case, New Delhi’s traditional ally, such as Russia, might side with China and hence would allow India to find military and tactical support from the willing partners, thereby bringing profound changes in the South Asian security architecture.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

I DON’T THINK @RRRMVIE IS A GAY LOVE STORY BUT EVEN IF IT WAS, IS ‘GAY LOVE STORY’ A BAD THING? —BAAHUBALI PRODUCER SHOBU YARLAGADDA



THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH IT. I MERELY QUOTED...THE BANTER THAT ALREADY EXISTS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN. —OSCAR-WINNING SOUND DESIGNER RESUL POOKUTTY

Bizarre Cuban Missile Crisis redux in Nicaragua

Nowadays, both Russia and the United States have ample weapons that they can fire at each other from their homelands

It was a piece of news so obscure and implausible that I missed it when it first surfaced last month. The news was that the Russians are going to put hypersonic nuclear missiles into Nicaragua and terrify the Americans into backing down over Ukraine. Or kill them all if they don’t.

“If American missile systems can nearly reach Moscow from Ukrainian territory, it’s time for Russia to roll out something powerful closer to the American ‘city on a hill,’” said Olga Skabeyeva on the news show on ‘Rossiya-1’, the most popular Russian TV channel.

The usual crew of panelists hugged themselves with delight at the idea of American cities being blown away. “Objects like the city of New York, a good city, but it would



GWYNNE DYER

(The author’s new book is The Shortest History of War)

be gone. Completely gone with one rocket,” said one.

Then they rambled on about how the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 had brought the Americans to their senses (bet you didn’t know that the US lost), and how Russian missiles in Nicaragua might bring Americans to their senses again. They will give in before they really get hurt.

As a substantial majority of the Russian television audience watches the show, that’s the news ordinary Russians are getting. But if these people really represent the Russian elite’s views of what is possible and necessary, then we’re all in trouble. Nuclear war is at hand.

I don’t really think nuclear war is at hand, but there is a lot of loose talk about it in Russia at the moment. So let’s examine

the optimistic assumption in the West that some people in the Russian military and diplomatic hierarchies – hopefully quite senior people – have a better grasp of reality than the television pundits.

Are there really Russian generals and senior foreign ministry officials who think that “American missile systems can nearly reach Moscow from the Ukrainian territory”? If you mean American nuclear missiles, then of course not.

The United States has given non-nuclear battlefield missiles to Ukraine, but it has deliberately restricted the ammunition to types that cannot reach any significant distance into Russia. There are no American troops in Ukraine, and no nuclear weapons in Ukrainian hands. The business about moving

American nuclear missiles ‘closer’ to Russia is complete tripe: they are just as lethal from where they are now. Russian generals and diplomats are not stupid: they know that American nuclear weapons systems have been able to reach Russia from the US homeland or any of the world’s oceans since the 1960s.

Well, then, how would putting Russian nuclear missiles in Nicaragua, ‘closer’ to the United States, give Russia any advantage either? It wouldn’t, although it would probably provoke the US government into a massive over-reaction. Like Russian nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962, you know?

The difference between Cuba in 1962 and Nicaragua today is that ‘close’ still meant something in 1962, when the

United States already had intercontinental ballistic missiles that could reach the old Soviet Union, but Russia had no long-range ballistic missiles that could hit American cities yet.

The Russians sneaked some shorter-range nuclear missiles into Cuba to even things up, but the Americans spotted them, imposed a blockade, and threatened to invade Cuba. Moscow pulled its missiles out, and everybody lived grumpily ever after.

Nowadays, both Russia and the United States have ample weapons that they can fire at each other from their homelands. ‘Closer’ no longer confers any advantages. Besides, Nicaragua has not said it will host Russian nuclear weapons, or indeed Russian weapons of any sort.

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega published a decree last month authorising small numbers of troops from Russia, the United States or other Central American countries to deploy to his country for a limited time ‘for purposes of training, law enforcement or emergency response’.

Ortega was a Marxist in the 1980s. After the Nicaraguan revolution triumphed, he got Soviet help, and US President Ronald Reagan financed a guerrilla/terrorist movement in an unsuccessful attempt to bring him down, but that was long ago.

Now, Ortega is just another dictator like Putin. He rigs elections, jails the opposition, and treats the state budget as his private income. Nicaragua is broke, so Ortega is happy to take

Russian money, but he’s probably not stupid enough to let the Russians bring missiles in.

Russia’s much-hyped hypersonic missiles are irrelevant anyway, since ‘hypersonic’ missiles are only useful if a country has good anti-missile defences. In fact, nobody has good missile defences, so, they make little difference strategically. Dumb missiles with some terminal guidance work just fine.

The rational conclusion, therefore, is that this is all just propaganda blather by ignorant Russian TV pundits, but a warning. I predicted that Russia would not invade Ukraine because it would be utterly stupid to do. I am still assuming that Russian leaders are rational, but now I have some doubts.

Health Min reduces gap for Covid booster dose to 6 mths

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Following recommendations from the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI), the Union Health Ministry on Wednesday said that it has decided to reduce the duration of the second dose of Covid-19 vaccine and precaution dose gap to 6 months from the earlier 9 months for all adults.

In a letter to the state and UT authorities, Union Health Secretary said, "It has now been decided that the precaution dose for all beneficiaries from 18-59 years will be administered after completion of 6 months or 26 weeks from the date of administration of second dose at Private Covid Vaccination Centers (CVCs)."

He also added that for beneficiaries aged 60 years and above as well as the Health Care Workers (HCWs) and



Front Line Workers (FLWs), precaution dose would be administered free of charge. "Corresponding changes have been made in the CoWIN system to facilitate the new dispensation," he stated.

Currently, all those above the age of 18 who have completed nine months after the administration of the second dose are eligible for the precaution dose. The Union Government had earlier

allowed citizens and students travelling overseas to get the shot before the stipulated nine-month waiting period as required by the guidelines of the destination country. Meanwhile, the total number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country crossed 180.58 crore on Tuesday, according to the Union health ministry.

More than 16 lakh (16,54,073) vaccine doses were

administered yesterday, the ministry had said. India's vaccination drive was rolled out on January 16 last year with the healthcare workers (HCWs) getting inoculated in the first phase. The vaccination of the frontline workers (FLWs) started from February 2 last year.

The next phase of Covid-19 vaccination commenced from March 1 last year for people over 60 years of age and those aged 45 and above with specific co-morbid conditions. The country launched vaccination for all people aged more than 45 years from April 1 last year.

India began administering precaution doses of the vaccines to the HCWs, the FLWs, including the personnel deployed on election duty, and those aged 60 and above with comorbidities from January 10 this year amid a spike in the number of coronavirus cases, fuelled by its Omicron variant.

ED attaches ₹86.65 crore of Chinese fintech companies

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached Rs 86.65 crore lying in various bank accounts and payment gateway accounts of Chinese fintech companies relating to NBFCs like Kudos Finance and Investments Private Ltd., Acemoney (India) Ltd, Rhino Finance Pvt. Ltd. and Pioneer Financial and Management Services Pvt. Ltd. under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The ED has been conducting money laundering investigations against a number of non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) which are in the business of Instant Personal Micro Loans.

"It is revealed that, various fintech companies backed by Chinese funds have made agreements with these NBFC companies for providing instant personal loans of term ranging from 7 days to 30 days. Fintech Companies brought the funds to be lent to the public, did MoU with the defunct NBFCs for their lending license," the ED said in a statement.

Since, the fintech companies were unlikely to get a fresh NBFC license from the RBI, they devised the MoU route with defunct NBFCs as a via media to do large scale lending activities.

It was projected that the NBFCs had hired Fintech Companies for Customer Discovery, but in reality the Fintech Companies were piggybacking on the license of the NBFCs and doing large scale lending business, it said. Entire decisions regarding fixation of interest rate/ processing fee/ platform fee were taken by fintech companies and these companies were operating on the basis of instructions from Chinese and Hong Kong-based persons. "NBFC companies

namely Kudos, Acemoney, Rhino and Pioneer entered into MoUs with foreign backed fintech companies to carry out online lending business in India.

An amount of Rs 940,46,39,498 has been considered to be proceeds of crime as the same was gained by way of predatory lending activities in violation of RBI guidelines," the agency said.

The ED has identified bank balances of Rs 86.65 crore in 155 bank accounts and the same have been attached under the provisions of PMLA to preserve the proceeds of crime. Further fund trail investigation is going on, it said.

Earlier in this case, a provisional attachment order was issued against NBFC Kudos Finance and Investments Private Limited and its fintech partners for a value of Rs 72.32 crore. The total attachment in this case till date is INR 158.97 crore.

Justice Rohini panel gets another extention

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday decided to grant a fresh six-month extension to the Justice Rohini Commission, set up to examine the sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes and equitable distribution of benefits reserved for them. This is the 13th extension given to the commission to submit its report. The Government had constituted the commission on October 2, 2017 under Article 340 of the Constitution to examine the issues related to the sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes. The extension has been granted up to January 31, 2023.

The commission must examine inequitable distribution of benefits of reservation among the castes or communities included in the OBC category with reference to such classes included in the Central List, working out the mechanism, criteria, norms and parameters in a scientific approach.

PM inaugurates Golden Jubilee celebrations of Agradoot group of papers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Stating that "well-informed, better-informed society should be the goal for all of us," Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday inaugurated the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Agradoot group of newspapers via video conferencing.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who is the chief patron of Agradoot's Golden jubilee celebration committee, was also present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister congratulated the "strong voice of the Northeast in the Assamese language" Dainik Agradoot for the occasion and complimented them for keeping the values of unity and harmony alive through the medium of journalism.

The Prime Minister remarked that under the guidance of Kanak Sen Deka, the Agradoot always kept the national interest paramount. Even during the Emergency, when the biggest attack on democracy took place, even then Agradoot daily and Deka ji did not compromise on journalistic values. He created a new generation of value-based journalism, he said.

The PM empathized that for the past few days, Assam is also facing great challenges and difficulties in the form of floods. Normal life has been greatly affected in many districts of Assam.

The Chief Minister and his team are working very hard day and night for relief and rescue, he said. Prime Minister assured the people of Assam, the readers of Agradoot, that the central and state governments are working together to reduce their difficulties.

He underlined the "sterling contribution" of Indian language journalism to Indian tradition, culture, freedom struggle and the development journey. Assam has played a

key role in the development of language journalism in India as the state has been a very vibrant place from the point of view of journalism. Journalism started 150 years ago in the Assamese language and kept on getting stronger with time, he added.

Modi recalled that the journey of the Dainik Agradoot in the last 50 years narrates the story of the change that has taken place in Assam. People's movements have played an important role in realizing this change.

People's movements protected the cultural heritage and Assamese pride of Assam. And now Assam is writing a new development story with the help of public participation.

He said when there is dialogue, there is a solution. "It is through dialogue that possibilities expand."

Therefore, along with the flow of knowledge in Indian democracy, the flow of information is also flowing continuously. Agradoot is part of that tradition", he said.

On the eve of 75 years of independence, the Prime Minister questioned limiting the intellectual space among a few people who know a particular language.

He further said this question is not only of emotion but also of scientific logic. This may be seen as a reason for lagging behind in research on the three industrial revolutions.

The Prime Minister said the expansion of Indian languages was stopped during the long period of slavery, and in modern epistemology, research was limited to a few languages.

Underlining the biodiversity and cultural richness of Assam and Northeast, the Prime Minister said Assam has a rich legacy of music and that it needs to reach the world at large.

He said efforts of the last 8 years with regard to physical and digital connectivity of the region will be hugely beneficial for the tribal tradition, tourism and culture of Assam.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla after paying tribute to Jana Sangh founder Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee on his birth anniversary, at the Central Hall of Parliament, in New Delhi on Wednesday

PTI

Phase I of video surveillance system at railway stations to be finished by Jan 2023

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The first phase of Indian Railways video surveillance system project at stations across country will be completed by January 2023, RailTel said in a statement on Wednesday.

RailTel is the implementing agency for the programme. The first phase of project will cover major stations of category A1, A, B and C numbering 756, and is likely to be completed by January 2023, it said, adding that remaining stations will be covered in the second phase. "In a bid to enhance security at railway stations which are major hubs of transportation, railways is in process of installing Internet

Protocol (IP) based Video Surveillance System (VSS) at stations, that is, waiting halls, reservation counters, parking areas, main entrance/exit, platforms, foot over bridges and booking offices," the statement said. The Ministry of Railways approved project under Nirbhaya funds. "We need to rapidly absorb new technology in railways, be it for rolling stock, construction, safety, cyber security, or in situations where there is a human interface," Railways Minister Ashwani Vaishnaw said. CCTV cameras of stations and video feeds will be monitored at three levels to ensure enhanced safety and security at railway premises.

SC to hear plea of Zee TV news anchor Rohit Ranjan today



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has agreed to hear on Thursday the plea of Zee TV news anchor Rohit Ranjan, facing several FIRs in some States for playing a doctored clip of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, seeking protection from coercive action for the alleged offence.

"List it tomorrow," a vacation Bench of justices Indira Banerjee and J K Maheswari said when senior advocate Siddharth Luthra, appearing for the TV anchor, sought an urgent hearing of the plea in view of registration of several FIRs against him in many States for telecast of the clip.

"This man was arrested yesterday by UP police at Noida and released on bail as the offence invoked was bailable," he said, adding that the anchor made an error in one of the shows and apologised for that and the news was taken back. "Now Chhattisgarh police want to arrest him. Please list this urgently since otherwise he will be in repeated custody," the senior lawyer said.

On Tuesday, a police team from Chhattisgarh reached Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad town to arrest the anchor from his home but he was instead

in central India, contributing to the Army's operational and logistic preparedness.

Previously, he served as the Additional Director General for Procurement and Equipment Management at the Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (Army) (2019-2021), General Officer Commanding a Strike Infantry Division (2018-2019), Deputy General Officer Commanding of Infantry Division (2015-2016), Commander of a Mountain Brigade (2013-2014) among other appointments within the Indian Armed Forces. He has served as India's

Defence Attache to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (2008-2012) and as a Staff Officer with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone in 2000. He holds two Master of Philosophy degrees in Defence and Management Studies as well as in Social Sciences.

He was commissioned into the Corps of Army Air Defence in 1986. He is an alumnus of Sainik School, Amaravatinagar, Tamil Nadu, National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla and the Indian Military Academy (IMA), Dehradun.

As regards India's role in



UN led peace keeping missions over the years, officials said India has, so far, provided 15 Force Commanders, two Military Advisors, one Deputy Military Advisor to the Secretary General of United Nations, two Divisions Commanders and eight Deputy Force Commanders in various United Nations Missions. India is among the largest contributors of uniformed personnel to the UN peacekeeping missions.

The Indian Army continues to play a lead role in United Nations Peacekeeping with presence in eight out of 14 (current) United Nations Missions worldwide and currently has over 5,400 military personnel deployed in challenging circumstances under the United Nations flag.

The Indian Army has large presence in United Nations Missions in Democratic Republic of Congo, Lebanon, South Sudan, Golan Heights, Syria, Western Sahara, Abyei and Cyprus. India is also deploying an infantry Battalion Group in UNISFA (Abyei).

IN SHORTS

NO INTERFERENCE WITH BOMBAY HC ORDER: SC

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to interfere with the Bombay High Court order which directed the issuance of a notification for holding of elections to 186 Panchayats in Goa and also to ensure completion of polls within 45 days.

WITHDRAW OBSERVATIONS AGAINST TEESTA: BABUS

New Delhi: A group of noted former civil servants on Wednesday in an open statement sought withdrawal of the Supreme Court's "gratuitous observations" against social activist Teesta Setalvad and others while upholding the SIT's clean chit to the then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi in the 2002 communal riots in the state.

SC STAYS MADRAS HC ORDER ON AIADMK

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the Madras High Court order which restrained the passing of any unannounced resolutions in the meeting of the AIADMK general and executive councils concerning the issue of single leadership of the party.

SC REFUSES TO CANCEL VIJAY BABU'S BAIL



New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to cancel the anticipatory bail granted to Malayalam actor-producer Vijay Babu in an alleged rape case by the high court, and asked him not to leave Kerala without prior permission.

Aadhaar needed to get compensation in human-elephant conflict cases now

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Henceforth, only those victims of human-elephant conflicts having Aadhaar number will get compensation under the Project Elephant.

The Centrally sponsored scheme of 'Project Elephant' is carried out by the State Governments with the primary goal to offer monetary and technical assist to the Elephant Range States of India for the safety of elephants, their habitats and hall, to fight the difficulty of human-animal battle and welfare of the captive elephants.

"The scheme provides for ex-gratia payment for loss of life or injury, damage to property or crop, etc., and also rewards the informers and payment of expenses on intelligence gathering respectively to the villagers, farmers, and other individuals," a senior Ministry official said..

"In case, any individual does not have Aadhaar at that point of time, he or she will need to enrol and offer proof of registra-

tion," the official stated adding that in case of individuals joining our training programmes, too would need Aadhaar card and if not, would need to enrol for it."

Human-elephant conflict caused 1,401 human and 301 elephant deaths in India from 2018-2020, Bhupendra Yadav, Union minister for environment, forest and climate had told the Rajya Sabha last August. Some 115 elephants and 457 people died in 2018-19, while 99 elephants and 585 people died in 2019-20. In 2020-21 (upto December 2020), 87 elephants and 359 people lost their lives in human-elephant conflict.

The Ministry does out monetary help as ex-gratia reduction of Rs 5 lakh in case of demise or everlasting incapacitation to a human; Rs 2 lakh for grievous damage; Rs 25,000 per particular person as price of remedy for minor damage. The compensation for lack of property / crops are paid by the states / UTs as per norms prescribed.



Arrested LeT Commander worked with J&K BJP for four years

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) commander Talib Shah, nabbed by the brave villagers of Mahore area in Reasi district on Sunday, was working with the Jammu and Kashmir Unit of the Bharatiya Janta Party since June 2018.

According to a press note issued by the office of the Bharatiya Janta Party through its press secretary Talib Shah was nominated as constituency Incharge of Darhal along with 36 others.

The press note issued on June 1, 2018 clearly stated, "BJP State Incharge IT and Social Media Department Jaidev Rajwal in consultation with BJP State President and MLA, Ravinder Raina and BJP State General Secretary (Org.) Ashok Kaul today announced Assembly Constituency Incharges of IT and Social Media Department".

Jaidev Rajwal nominated thirty seven assembly con-

stituency Incharges of Jammu Province. According to the press note, Talib Shah was nominated as constituency Incharge of Darhal.

Later in April 2020, BJP Minority Morcha President Sheikh Bashir in consultation with party's J&K President Ravinder Raina, party J&K General Secretary (Org.) Ashok Kaul and other senior leaders of the party announced new Office Bearers, Working Committee Members and District Presidents for BJP Minority Morcha.

According to the press note circulated to the media on April 23, 2020, "Talib Shah was nominated as Morcha Publicity Secretary, whereas Mushtaq Ahmed Sheikh (Kupwara) and Fayaz Ahmed Naik (Banihal) were nominated as Morcha Additional Publicity Secretaries".

Responding to the gesture, Talib Shah posted a tweet on April 25, 2020 thanking the party leadership. "I am high-

ly thankful to Bharatiya Janata party Jammu Kashmir state president Ravinder Raina ji and State or General secretary Ashok Koul ji, BJP minority morcha president Sheikh Mohamed".

Recently, on May 9, 2022, BJP's Minority Morcha President, Sheikh Bashir, had appointed him incharge of the IT and Social media department, Minority Morcha. According to Sheikh Bashir, Shah, later resigned from the post on May 27, 2022.

This correspondent also contacted State Press Secretary, BJP Dr Pardeep Mahotra and also forwarded an email to him to verify whether Talib Shah mentioned in their press notes is the same person arrested by the police or not. Till late evening Dr Mahotra, who was attending a training session in the tourist resort of Patnitop, had not responded despite repeated requests. On the other hand former BJP State Incharge IT and Social Media



Department Jaidev Rajwal when contacted clarified party Chief Ravinder Raina had addressed a press conference on this topic where he had issued a detailed clarification.

After his links surfaced

with the BJP, the Jammu and Kashmir Unit Chief Ravinder Raina immediately rushed to demand National Investigation Agency (NIA) probe into Talib Shah's terror links.

While addressing media

persons in the party headquarters on Tuesday Raina had also claimed that Talib Shah visited the BJP office pretending to be a journalist. Stating that top J&K BJP leaders and office-bearers were on Talib

Hussain's hit-list, Raina had also sought a probe by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in this matter.

"Talib Hussain did recce of my office. He sent videos of my office to his Pakistani handlers. He used to meet BJP leaders by posing as a journalist. We demand a NIA probe," he said.

Raina also said the party has issued a show cause notice to Minority Morcha President Sheikh Bashir and asked him to reply within 48 hours. "He doesn't have the authority to make any appointment. Every appointment in the party is made by the President," the BJP leader said.

When Contacted Sheikh Bashir told The Pioneer, "I will first respond to the show cause notice then only I will speak to the media about this issue".

Significantly, images accessed by this correspondent clearly revealed Talib Shah not only attended party programs along with senior

party leaders in the party headquarters but was also working in the remote areas of Rajouri and propagating schemes of the Union government headed by Narendra Modi in the company of party workers.

His images with Member Parliament from Jammu-Poonch Lok Sabha seat Jugal Kishore Sharma and others have gone viral. In these images he is seen garlanding BJP MP, attending public meetings and party programs being addressed by the former incharge of Jammu and Kashmir unit Avinash Rai Khanna, J&K BJP organisation secretary Ashok Koul, Ravinder Raina and other party leaders and workers. In some of the images Talib Shah is also seen attending training programs in the party office along with other office bearers raising doubts over the claims made by the BJP leaders while washing their hands over their association with him.

Chemist's killing: NIA conducts searches at 13 locations in Amravati

PNS/T N RAGHUNATHA ■ NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday carried out searches at multiple locations in Amravati district of eastern Maharashtra in connection with the sensational murder of a chemist Umesh Prahladrao Kolhe over a WhatsApp message posted by him in support of suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma.

In an official statement, the NIA said that it had conducted searches at 13 locations in Amravati district after it took over the investigations from the Amravati police and re-registered a case on July 2, 2022 in connection with the murder that took place on the night of June 21.

"During the searches conducted today at the premises of accused and suspects, digital devices (mobile phones, SIM cards, memory cards, DVRs), pamphlets spreading hate messages, knives and other incriminating documents and materials, have been seized," the NIA said. In

all, seven persons, including the master-mind Sheikh Irfan, have been arrested in connection with Kolhe's murder. The six other accused in the case are: Mudassir Ahmed (22), Shahrukh Pathan (25), Abdul Taufiq (24), Shoib Khan (22), Atib Rashid (22) and Yusuf Bahadur Khan. All of them are in NIA's custody now. The NIA has booked the seven accused in the case under Section 16, 18 and 20 of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and Section 34, 153 (A), 153 (B), 120 (B) and 302 IPC has been filed based on a complaint by Kolhe's son Sanket Kolhe.

The incident took place between 10 pm and 10.30 pm on June 21 when Kolhe was on his way home after closing his shop -- Amit Medical Store. Sanket (27) and his wife Vaishnavi were accompanying him on another scooter.

Two motorcycle-borne assailants waylaid Kolhe. One of them stabbed him on the left side of his neck. In his complaint, Sanket told the police: "We were moving from Prabhat Chowk and our scooters had reached the

Mahila College New High School's gate. Two men on a motorcycle suddenly came in front of my father's scooter and stopped him. One of them stabbed him on the left side of his neck with a knife.

"My father fell and was bleeding. I stopped my scooter and started shouting for help. Another man came and the three fled the spot on the motorcycle. With help from passers-by, I rushed my father to nearby Axon Hospital where he died during treatment," Sanket said.

The investigations have revealed that Kolhe had circulated on WhatsApp a post supporting BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma, Police Vikram Sali said that prima facie Umesh Kolhe's murder was an off-shoot of a social media post supporting Nupur Sharma, who had made controversial comments on the Prophet in a television debate.

Kolhe inadvertently posted the message in a whatsapp group where there are Muslims who were also his customers. One of the arrested accused reportedly said that Kolhe's post was an insult to the Prophet and hence he must die.

Govt directs edible oil manufacturers to further cut MRP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday directed the edible oil manufacturers to further cut the maximum retail price (MRP) of imported cooking oils by up to Rs 10 per litre within a week, and maintain a uniform MRP of the same brand of oil across the country following a fall in global prices.

Taking note of a further drop in global prices, Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey called a meeting of all edible oil associations and major manufacturers to discuss the current trend and pass on the falling global prices to consumers by reducing the MRP. "We made a detailed presentation and told them that global prices have declined by 10 per cent in last one week alone. This should be passed on to consumers. We have asked them to reduce the MRP," Pandey said after the meeting.

As India imports more than 60 per cent of its edible oil requirement, retail prices came under pressure in the last few months taking cues from the



global market. However, there has been a correction, resulting fall in global prices.

Edible oil makers had cut prices by up to Rs 10-15 per litre last month and prior to that had also reduced the MRP taking cues from the global market.

Major edible oil makers have promised to reduce the MRP by up to Rs 10 per litre by next week in all imported edible oils like palm oil, soyabean and sunflower oil, he said and added, once the prices of these edible oils are reduced, the rates of other cooking oils will also get reduced.

Besides this, the Secretary asked the manufacturers to maintain a uniform MRP of the same brands of cooking oils across the country as currently there is a difference of Rs 3-5 per litre in different zones.

Harijans upset over Cherian's statement on Ambedkar

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The anti-Constitution speech made by Saji Cherian, Minister for Fisheries and Culture, at Mallappalli in Pathanamthitta district on Sunday has upset the entire Harijan community in the country.

An apolitical person like Acharya M K Kunhol, a widely respected social leader in the State came out in the open lambasting Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Minister Cherian, as well as the CPI-M over the speech in which Dr B R Ambedkar and other members of the drafting committee of the Indian Constitution including the first President Dr Rajendra Prasad were humiliated and portrayed very poorly.

Saji Cherian in his speech on Sunday alleged that the persons who drafted the Constitution simply copied down what was dictated by the colonial masters and put it as the Indian Constitution, which could be described as the best means for exploitation. "If you do not know about the Constitution, it is better to keep quiet about it. Neither minister Cherian nor his party,

the CPI-M, know the sacredness and serenity of the Constitution. Even EMS Namboodirippadu, the former general secretary of the party had any respect for Dr Ambedkar or the Constitution of India," Acharya Kunhol, who had been honoured with Padma Shree by the President of India, said in a statement on Wednesday. He also pointed out that the CPI-M was not in existence when Baba Saheb Ambedkar crafted the world's best Constitution for the country.

The Acharya recounted the number of Harijan youths murdered by the CPI-M in Kerala. "The CPI-M is a party of high caste communal persons. Harijans always get a raw deal in that party," said the Acharya who pointed out the recent murder of Deepu, a Harijan youth at Kizhakkambalam by the CPI-M activists.

The CPI-M leadership remained tight-lipped over the faux pas committed by the minister even as the demand for his dismissal from the ministry grew louder on the second day. The Congress-led UDF tried in vain to raise the issue in the legislative assembly on

Wednesday. But the Punjab-born Speaker M B Rajesh adjourned the House within minutes of the sitting to deny the Opposition any room to embarrass the treasury benches.

"This is unheard of in the history of Kerala Assembly," said V D Satheshan, leader of the Opposition who led the UDF MLAs in a walk out and staged a demonstration in front of Dr Ambedkar's statue. "Jai Bheem" and "Jai Ambedkar" slogans were raised in the House as well as the Secretariat premises for the first time by Opposition who wanted the dismissal of the minister for his speech.

Saji Cherian who had said on Tuesday that it was the local slang in his speech that caused the misunderstanding about his speech made yet another U-turn on Wednesday. While speaking to the reporters, he said it was a slip of the tongue and he was sorry for that. "Saji Cherian is trying to save his skin by one excuse or other. The truth is that there is no options before him other than submitting his resignation," said BJP leader and former Mizoram Governor Kummanam Rajasekharan.

Gujarat: Heavy rain disrupts normal life in Gir Somnath, Junagadh districts

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Heavy and incessant rains disrupted normal life in several parts of Gir Somnath and Junagadh districts in Gujarat, with Sutrapada taluka in Gir Somnath recording 300 mm downpour in 30 hours till Wednesday noon, officials said.

The Meteorological Centre here said monsoon is now active in Gujarat as a low pressure area was formed over Kutch region, and more downpour is likely over the next five days across the state.

Gir Somnath and Junagadh districts have been witnessing heavy rains since Tuesday, the

officials said.

As per the data shared by the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC), Sutrapada taluka received 300 mm rainfall in the last 30 hours that ended at 12 pm of Wednesday, including 132 mm rainfall between 6 am and 12 pm.

Similarly, neighbouring Kodinar taluka of the same district received 119 mm rainfall between 6 am and 12 pm on Wednesday, Veraval taluka 106 mm, Mangrol taluka of Junagadh 82 mm, followed by Bhuj(Kutch) with 51 mm, Hansot (Bharuch) with 42 mm and Kalyanpur (Devbhumi

Dwarka) with 33 mm, the SEOC said.

Normal life was affected in Mangrol, Kodinar and Veraval towns as well as several villages in Sutrapada and Kodinar talukas due to heavy downpour as low-lying areas, agricultural fields, housing societies and several roads were submerged

in knee-deep water, officials said. Gujarat Revenue Minister Rajendra Trivedi visited the SEOC in state capital Gandhinagar to take stock of the situation and review the preparedness of the authorities as more rainfall is predicted in the next five days.

"Most parts of Gujarat are

likely to receive normal rainfall in the next five days," said Manorama Mohanty, director of the Meteorological Centre in Ahmedabad.

Heavy to very heavy showers, and at some places extremely heavy rains, are likely at isolated places in Gir Somnath, Devbhumi Dwarka,

Surat, Valsad and Navsari districts during the next 24 hours.

"On July 8 and 9, extremely heavy rainfall may occur at some places in Valsad, Navsari, Kutch, Devbhumi Dwarka, Jamnagar and Porbandar districts due to the low pressure area over Kutch region," Mohanty said.

FROM PAGE 1

RECORD 7.5L APPLY FOR IAF AGNIPATH

In the first four years, 46,000 Agniveers will be inducted into the armed forces with the Army intake standing at 40,000 and the IAF and the Navy 3,000 each. Officials also explained that the intake of the Agniveers would be progressively increased in the next few years. Intake of recruits under the Agnipath will increase from 46,000 annually in the first 4 years, to 90,000 in the fifth year to 1,25,000 from the sixth year.

The main focus of the Agnipath policy is to have a youthful profile and soldiers who are technology savvy to fight modern day warfare.

UDDHAV CAMP MP STIRS FEAR OF FRESH REBELLION

Shewale reminded Uddhav that late Sena chief Balasaheb Thackeray had not backed the NDA candidate when there was a Shiv Sena-BJP alliance. "Balasaheb had supported Pratibha Patil as he hails from Maharashtra. Similarly, the Shiv Sena chief had also backed Pranab Mukherjee. I humbly request that you support Murmu and direct all Shiv Sena MPs to do so, keeping in mind her background and contribution to public life," Shewale wrote in his letter. Currently, the Shiv Sena has 18 Lok Sabha members. Of them, four MPs have already shifted loyalty from the parent Shiv Sena to the Eknath Shinde camp. They comprise: Shrikant Shinde, son of current Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Bhavana Gawali, Rajan Vichare. At least half a dozen MPs have either agreed to shift to sides or are in touch with Eknath Shinde.

Notwithstanding fears of a possibility of a fresh rebellion within the party, the Shiv Sena will in all likelihood support Yeshwant Sinha's candidature in the polls -- especially in the light of the fact that both the NCP and Congress have stood solidly by the Shiv Sena during the recent developments that

saw rebel part leader Eknath Shinde walk away with the party's 40 out of the 55 MLAs reducing the Sena to a party with just 15 MLAs.

Informed Sena sources said that the party leadership had reached out to Shewale and other party MPs in the state in its bid to ensure against a possible fresh rebellion - this time among the party MPs. It remains to be seen if the Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena is able to hold its flock of MPs together in the face of poaching efforts by the Eknath Shinde camp.

CBI RAIDS 16 SPOTS IN GRAFT CASE FLAGGED BY J&K EX-GUV MALIK

The agency is also conducting searches at the premises of Rupen Patel, chairman and managing director of Patel Engineering Ltd in Mumbai besides those of other accused Vijay Gupta and Amrendra Kumar Singh among others, they further said.

Malik had said when he was the Governor two files came to him for clearance, one belonging to Ambani and another to an RSS-affiliated man who was a Minister in the previous Mehbooba Muft-led PDP-BJP coalition Government and claimed to be very close to the Prime Minister (Narendra Modi). "I was informed by the secretaries in both the departments that there is a scandal and I accordingly cancelled both the deals. The secretaries told me that 'you will get Rs 150 crore each for clearing the files' but I told them that I have come with five kurta-pyjamas and will leave with that only," Malik had told a gathering at an event at Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan in October last year.

In its FIR relating to the alleged malpractices in awarding contract for the civil works package of Kiru hydroelectric power project registered in April this year, the CBI had said guidelines related to e-tendering were violated.

The CBI had also conducted a round of

searches on April 21, a day after the registration of the FIR on April 20 this year.

"The case was registered on allegations of malpractices in award of the contract worth Rs 2,200 crore (approximately) of civil works of Kiru hydro-electric power project (HEP) to a private company in the year 2019," the CBI had earlier said.

The agency has booked Navin Kumar Chaudhary, M S Babu, former MD, M K Mittal and Arun Kumar Mishra, former directors and the private contractor Patel Engineering Ltd.

"Though a decision was taken in 47th Board meeting of CVPPPL (Chenab Valley Power Projects (P) Ltd) for re-tender through e-tendering with reverse auction after cancellation of ongoing tendering process, same was not implemented (as per decision taken in 48th board meeting) and tender was finally awarded to Patel Engineering Ltd," the FIR has alleged.

PT USHA, ILAIYARAAJA, BAHUBALI'S MAKER, HEGGADE NOMINATED TO RS

Heggade is a spiritual activist from Karnataka and the PM shared a photo with him during his visit at Dharmashta Temple, While congratulating him, Modi recalled Heggade's "good work in health, education and culture. "He will certainly enrich Parliamentary proceedings," Modi said in his tweet.

DGCA NOTICE TO SPICEJET FOR FAILURE TO OFFER 'SAFE' FLIGHTS

In the first such incident, a China-bound SpiceJet cargo plane returned to Kolkata on Tuesday morning due to faulty weather radar. The SpiceJet cargo plane of Boeing 737 was scheduled to operate from Kolkata to Chongqing, but after

the takeoff it was found that weather radar was unserviceable. The pilot-in-command decided to return to Kolkata and landed the plane safely there.

In the second incident, smoke was detected in IndiGo's Raipur-Indore flight after it landed at its destination. All the passengers were able to disembark from the aircraft safely.

In the third incident, an engine of a Vistara aircraft on the way from Bangkok failed after it landed at the Delhi IGI airport but all passengers disembarked safely.

The DGCA has given the accountable manager of SpiceJet, its chairman and managing director Ajay Singh, three weeks to respond to why action should not be taken against the airline.

The notice said SpiceJet has failed to "establish safe, efficient and reliable air services" under the terms of Rule 134 and Schedule XI of the Aircraft Rules, 1937. "Whereas the reported incidents on aircraft operated by M/s SpiceJet Ltd from 1st April 2022 till date have been renewed and it has been observed that at a number of occasions the aircraft either turned back to its originating station or continued landing to the destination with degraded safety margins," the notice said.

The DGCA has also flagged the airline's financial condition that has led to shortage of spare parts. "...financial assessment carried out by DGCA in September 2021 has also revealed that the airline is operating on Cash & Carry and Suppliers/Approved Vendors are not being paid on a regular basis leading to shortage of spares..." the regulator wrote in its notice.

The notice comes a day after the airline faced at least three incidents, which included a diversion of a Delhi-Dubai flight to Karachi due to a fuel indicator malfunction, a cracked windshield on a Kandla-Mumbai flight, and a snag in the weather radar on its cargo aircraft flying from Kolkata to Chongqing forcing a turnback. The snags on Tuesday take the total incidents involving SpiceJet to 8 since May 1.

"The review (of the incidents) transpires that

poor internal safety oversight and inadequate maintenance actions (as most of the incidents were related to either component failure or system-related failure) have resulted in degradation of the safety margins," it added.

According to Singh, when you have thousands of flights, sometimes the air conditioning will fail, sometimes a bird will hit the plane, and sometimes a fuel indicator will light up. "These things are going to happen and, of course, we have to minimise that to the greatest extent possible. That is our job and it is the regulator's job to push us to make things better, which we will do," he said.

BJP DEMANDS MAHUA'S ARREST FOR INSULT TO GODDESS KALI

Though the TMC distanced itself from Moitra's statement, the Nadia MP remained defiant saying she was herself a worshipper of Kali and knew what was right and what was wrong.

A defiant Moitra, who had earlier stirred a hornets' nest saying that Kali was worshipped with alcohol and subsequently tweeted, "To all you sanghis - lying will NOT make you better Hindus. I NEVER backed any film or poster or mentioned the word smoking. Suggest you visit my Maa Kali in Tarapith to see what food & drink is offered as bhog. Joy Ma Tara (another name and form of Kali)."

The BJP's anti-Moitra tirade is seen as a measure to counter the police actions initiated by the Trinamool Congress Government against saffron leader Nupur Sharma who had reportedly made some derogatory remarks against Prophet Muhammad. Also launching a scathing attack on Mamata Banerjee for using the "jihad" word to further her electoral ambitions, he said such usages had gone into the gene of the ruling Trinamool Congress and that such words were being deliberately used by the Chief Minister to play to a certain section of the gallery.

Political instability deepens in Lanka as Aviation Min resigns

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Cabinet was on Wednesday thrown into turmoil by the resignation of Aviation Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva while another senior minister demanded that Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe should quit as the finance minister alleging that he halted all the projects that could bring in the much-needed forex to the country facing worst economic crisis.

De Silva, Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Aviation, resigned following an allegation made by main Opposition SJB leader Sajith Premadasa in Parliament on Tuesday that a Cabinet Minister had solicited a bribe from Japan's Taisei Corporation.

De Silva, in a letter addressed to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, said although he was not directly accused of demanding a bribe he was resigning in order to allow an impartial investigation as the allegation concerned his ministry.

According to media reports, the Japanese firm is involved in the expansion of the Bandaranaike International Airport here.

Meanwhile, newly-appointed minister of invest-



ment promotion, Dhammika Perera, addressing a gathering here, demanded that Wickremesinghe should resign as the minister of finance.

Perera, a former business leader, alleged that Wickremesinghe was blocking dollar inflows into the country and he had no cash flow plan to resolve the forex

crisis. Wickremesinghe ignored to respond to the Opposition when asked to react in Parliament on Perera's attack on him.

Sri Lanka is going through the worst economic crisis since its independence from Britain in 1948, and needs to obtain at least USD 4 billion to tide over the acute shortage in foreign

exchange reserves.

The country, with an acute foreign currency crisis that resulted in foreign debt default, had announced in April that it is suspending nearly USD 7 billion foreign debt repayment due for this year out of about USD 25 billion due through 2026.

Sri Lanka's total foreign debt stands at USD 51 billion.

Sri Lankan president calls Russian leader seeking fuel

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said Wednesday that he had a telephone call with Russian leader Vladimir Putin to request credit support to import fuel for the island nation that is facing its worst economic crisis in memory.

"Had a very productive telecon with the Russia President Vladimir Putin. While thanking him for all the support extended by his govt to overcome the challenges of the past, I requested an offer of credit support to import fuel to #lka in defeating the current econ challenges," Rajapaksa said in a tweet.

Western nations largely have cut off energy imports from Russia in line with sanctions over its war on Ukraine. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said earlier that the government would look for other sources first but it has not been successful.

Since Russia's invasion of

Ukraine in late February, global oil prices have skyrocketed, prompting a number of countries to seek out Russian crude, which is being offered at steep discounts.

Sri Lanka's economic crisis has led to a dire fuel shortage forcing the government to shut schools and ask employees other than those in essential services to work from home to cut down on consuming the limited stocks. The government said earlier that no entity is willing to supply oil to Sri Lanka even for cash because its petroleum corporation owes a heavy debt.

Sri Lanka's foreign currency crunch led to its suspending repayment of foreign debt in April pending outcome of negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for a bailout package. However, Wickremesinghe told Parliament on Tuesday that discussions with the IMF have been complex and difficult because Sri Lanka is now a bankrupt nation.

Afghan soil won't be used to launch attacks, says Taliban leader

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

Taliban supreme leader Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada said Wednesday that Afghan soil will not be used to launch attacks against other countries, and he asked the international community to not interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs.

The Taliban say they are adhering to an agreement they signed with the United States in 2020 - before retaking power - in which they promised to fight terrorists.

Since their takeover last year, they have repeatedly said Afghanistan would not be used as a launching pad for attacks against other countries.

"We assure our neighbours, the region and the world that we will not allow anyone to use our territory to threaten the security of other countries. We also want other countries not to interfere in our internal affairs," Akhundzada said in an address ahead of the Eid al-Adha holiday.

The Taliban were ousted by a US-led coalition in 2001 for harbouring Osama bin Laden, mastermind of the 9/11 attacks in the United States. The religious group captured power again in mid-August, during the chaotic last weeks of the U.S. And NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan.

The international community has been wary of any recognition or cooperation with the Taliban, especially after they restricted the rights of women and minorities - measures that harken back to their harsh rule when they were last in power in the late 1990s.

Akhundzada, the spiritual chief of the Taliban, has remained a reclusive figure. He rose to leader of the Islamist movement in a swift transition of power after a 2016 U.S.

Drone strike killed his predecessor, Mullah Akhtar Mansour.

After taking over, Akhundzada secured the backing of al-Qaida chief Ayman al-Zawahiri, who showered the cleric with praise, calling him "the emir of the faithful." The endorsement by bin Laden's heir helped seal his jihadist credentials with the Taliban's long-time allies.

However, in his Eid message Akhundzada said: "Within the framework of mutual interaction and commitment, we want good, diplomatic, economic and political relations with the world, including the United States, and we consider this in the interest of all sides."

A three-day assembly of Islamic clerics and tribal elders in the Afghan capital that concluded Saturday included pledges of support for the Taliban and calls on the international community to recognize the country's Taliban-led government.

In a surprise development, the reclusive Akhundzada came to Kabul from his base in southern Kandahar province and addressed the gathering Friday. It was believed to be his first visit to the Afghan capital since the Taliban seized power.

In an hour-long speech at the assembly carried by state radio, Akhundzada called the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan a "victory for the Muslim world."

A powerful earthquake in June killed more than 1,000 people in eastern Afghanistan, igniting yet another crisis for the economically struggling country.

Overstretched aid groups already keeping millions of Afghans alive rushed supplies to the quake victims, but most countries responded tepidly to Taliban calls for international help.

EU lawmakers back gas, nuclear energy as sustainable

AP ■ BRUSSELS

European Union lawmakers voted Wednesday to include natural gas and nuclear in the bloc's list of sustainable activities, backing a proposal from the EU's executive arm that has been drawing fierce criticism from environment groups and will likely trigger legal challenges.

As the EU wants to set the best global standards in the fight against climate change, the decision could tarnish the bloc's image and question the region's commitment to reaching climate neutrality by 2050.

The European Commission earlier this year made the proposal as part of its plans for building a climate-friendly future, dividing member countries and drawing outcry from environmentalists over what they criticize as "greenwashing."

EU legislators from the environment and economy committees objected last month to the plan, setting up Wednesday's decisive vote in Strasbourg, France. But MEPs rejected their resolution in a 328-278 vote, with 33 lawmakers abstaining. The result was announced to a salvo of applause.



An absolute majority of 353 was needed to veto the proposal. If the European Parliament and member countries don't object to it by July 11, the so-called Taxonomy delegated act

will enter into force and apply as of next year.

Greenpeace immediately said it will submit a formal request for internal review to the European Commission, and then take legal action at the European Court of Justice if the result isn't conclusive.

"It's dirty politics and it's an outrageous outcome to label gas and nuclear as green and keep more money flowing to (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's war chest, but now we will fight this in the courts," said Ariadna Rodrigo, Greenpeace's EU sustainable finance campaigner.

European Parliament rapporteur Bas Eickhout rued "a dark day for the climate and the energy transition."

The green labeling system from the European Commission defines what qualifies as an investment in sustainable energy. Under certain conditions, gas and nuclear energy will now be part of the mix, making it easier for private investors to inject money into both.

With the EU aiming to reach climate neutrality by 2050 and to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, the commission says the classification system is crucial to direct investments into sustainable energy.

Boris Johnson vows to 'keep going' amid flurry of resignations

PTI ■ LONDON

Defiant Boris Johnson vowed to "keep going" as he cited his "colossal mandate" from voters to carry on as British Prime Minister when he faced off with angry lawmakers in Parliament on Wednesday in the wake of the dramatic resignation of ally Rishi Sunak as Chancellor, followed by a string of resignations by junior ministerial and government aides.

Johnson, 58, appeared at the weekly Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) in the House of Commons just hours after the big blow of losing Sunak, and Health Secretary Sajid Javid in quick succession.

A flurry of junior ministerial and government aide resignations, totalling around 30 and rising, continues to hit the embattled leader even as Javid made a speech in the Commons calling upon his former Cabinet colleagues to reconsider their decision to continue to back Johnson because "enough is enough".

That flurry intensified

while Johnson appeared for a grilling from the Parliament's Liaison Committee, with five junior ministers resigning collectively through one letter. This was followed up by the BBC confirming that another Cabinet minister, Levelling Up Secretary Michael Gove, has asked Johnson to step down as leader. "The job of a Prime Minister in difficult circumstances, when you've been handed a colossal mandate, is to keep going, and that's what I am going to do," said Johnson, in response to repeated demands for him to resign.

"It's exactly when times are tough, that when the country faces pressures on the economy and pressures on their budgets and when we have the biggest war in Europe for 80 years, that is exactly the moment that you'd expect a government to continue with its work, not to walk away, and to get on with the job," he said.

Opposition Leader Sir Keir Starmer attacked Johnson over his handling of the latest scandal to hit Downing Street, reading out the accusations

levelled at his disgraced former Deputy Chief Whip as a "reminder to all those propping up this Prime Minister just how serious the situation is".

In fiery exchanges at PMQs, the Labour leader said the list of resignations had left him with a "Z list cast of nodding dogs" on his frontbench, adding the "sinking ships are fleeing the rat". Several on the Conservative benches also piled the pressure, with former Brexit minister David Davis, who had told Johnson "in the name of God, go" just six months ago, reiterated his demand: "Do the honourable thing [and] put the interests of the nation before his own interests and before, in his own words, it does become impossible for government to do its job." The exit of Sunak and Javid has left the Conservative Party leader in a precarious position as further resignations are expected.

Earlier on Wednesday, Will Quince, who was sent out to defend No. 10 Downing Street's appointment of Chris Pincher as Deputy Chief Whip just

hours before Johnson admitted his mistake in appointing him to a government job, resigned as an education minister.

Soon after, Robin Walker resigned as the schools minister, warning against a "worrying narrowing of the broad church that I believe any Conservative government should seek to achieve". It came as Tory MP Laura Trott quit as a ministerial aide at the transport department saying the government has lost trust, adding to a growing number of aides who have similarly stepped down.

However, Johnson has moved swiftly to fill the top jobs with Iraqi immigrant minister Nadhim Zahawi stepping in as UK Chancellor of the Exchequer and Steve Barclay as Health Secretary. "The team in government today is the team that will deliver," said Zahawi, in his first set of interviews in the new post. He urged his Cabinet colleagues to unite behind Johnson, saying: "This is a team game, and you play for the team, and you deliver for the team."

Spain's famous Bull Run festival back after 2-year hiatus

AP ■ MADRID

Thousands of revelers erupted in celebration Wednesday as the traditional "chupinazo" firework was ignited to start the San Fermin bull-run festival in the Spanish city of Pamplona, ending a two-year hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Rain did nothing to dampen the atmosphere as crowds, nearly all dressed in the traditional garb of white trousers and shirt with red sash and neckerchief, crammed the tiny town hall square for the noon event.

After the firework exploded, the revellers continued spraying each other with red wine.



The highlight of the nine-day festival are the early morning "encierros," or bull runs, starting on Thursday, when thousands of thrill seekers scramble like mad to avoid six bulls as they charge along a winding, cobblestoned route to the city's bullring.

Spectators watch from balconies and the wooden barricades set up to line the course. The rest of each day is for eating, drinking, dancing and cultural entertainment.

The festival was made world famous by Ernest Hemingway's 1926 novel "The

Sun Also Rises."

Before the pandemic made it impossible to hold in 2020 and 2021, it hadn't been suspended since the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s. Former football player and coach Juan Carlos Unzué had the honor of launching the little rocket from the town hall balcony.

Unzué had to retire from coaching in 2018 after being diagnosed with the neurodegenerative disease ALS, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

"This chupinazo" is dedicated to all those health workers and people who helped us during the pandemic, and to all those suffering from ALS. Long live San Fermin," he shouted from a wheelchair to the seething throng below.

Cairo's historic Nile River houseboats removed in Govt push

AP ■ CAIRO

With verdant gardens on one side and water on the other, they were an anomaly in a city bordered on three sides by desert.

For decades, Cairo's houseboats occupied prime waterfront real estate, offering residents a front-row seat to the passing Nile River, with its water taxis, anglers, sport rowers and occasional family of ducks. But it's coming to an end: A government push to remove the string of float-



ing homes from the city's Nile River banks has dwindled their numbers from several dozen to just a handful.

Houseboats have been a Cairo tradition dating back to the 1800s and government efforts to remove them have drawn

criticism in Egypt, where residents are mourning the loss of not just their homes but a way of life. Critics say the move is part of a series of development decisions by the government of Abdel Fattah el-Sissi that endanger the city's heritage.

"The point is that they really, really don't seem to understand that there is value - intangible values - there is value in history," said Ahdaf Soueif, a prize-winning Egyptian novelist who bought and renovated a her houseboat after moving back to Egypt from the UK 10 years ago.

Jihadis attack jail in Nigeria's Capital, 600 inmates escape

AP ■ ABUJA

At least 600 inmates escaped in a jailbreak in Nigeria's capital city, officials said Wednesday, blaming the attack on Islamic extremist rebels.

About 300 have been recaptured, authorities said. The "very determined" rebels attacked the Kuje maximum prison in Abuja on Tuesday night with "very high-grade explosives," killing one guard on duty, according to Shuaib Belgore, permanent secretary of Nigeria's Ministry of Interior.

Explosions and gunfire were heard at about 10 p.m. In the Kuje area of Abuja when the attackers arrived and forced their way into the prison through a hole created by the explosives.

The Islamic extremist rebels who attacked the prison have waged an insurgency in the country's northeast for over a decade.

Their attack on the detention facility freed many of their members who are inmates, prison officials said.

"We understand they are Boko Haram. They came specifically for their co-conspirators," said Belgore.

"Right now, we have retrieved about 300 out of about 600 that got out of the jail."

Marcos plays balancing act in meeting with China's FM

AP ■ MANILA

New Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr met with China's top diplomat Wednesday to take up long-simmering disputes in the South China Sea, as he waded into foreign policy dilemmas that include the U.S.-China rivalry in the region.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, wearing a native Filipino formal shirt, met his counterpart for talks at the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila and later met Marcos Jr at the presidential palace. No detailed statement about the talks was immediately released by Philippine officials. Chinese officials have frowned on what they perceive as undue media focus on the territorial conflicts that put Beijing in a bad light.

In Beijing, a Chinese Foreign Ministry statement quoted Wang as telling National Security Adviser Clarita Carlos in Manila that Marcos Jr's election "has turned a new page in China-Philippines relations, and the two peoples are full of expectations for the development of bilateral relations."

The statement did not say if the territorial disputes were taken up. "Our only choice is to be friendly, friendly, and



friendly again," Wang said. Wang arrived in Manila Tuesday night as part of a Southeast Asian swing that brought him earlier to Myanmar and Thailand. He will also visit Malaysia and Indonesia, where he will attend a meeting of G-20 foreign ministers in Bali.

Wang's visit ushers Marcos Jr. Early to touchy foreign diplomacy issues that often had prompted his predecessors to carry out delicate balancing acts. Marcos Jr. Was sworn into office last week after a landslide electoral victory in May. He said in a televised news conference Tuesday that he would discuss with Wang possible ways to resolve Manila's disputes with Beijing in the contested South China Sea but would also propose to broaden ties further.

HALEP VS RYBAKINA IN WIMBLEDON SEMIS

AP ■ LONDON

Former champion Simona Halep said she is playing her "best tennis" as she set up a Wimbledon semi-final clash with Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina on Wednesday.

Halep, the 2019 winner, comfortably reached her third semi-final at the All England Club with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Amanda Anisimova of the United States.

Russian-born Rybakina became the first player representing Kazakhstan to reach a Grand Slam semi-final when she defeated Ajla Tomljanovic of Australia, 4-6, 6-2, 6-3.

"Definitely this is my best tennis," said Halep, who missed last year's Wimbledon with a calf injury.

"I am trying to build my confidence back, and it's good."

The Romanian 16th seed, who was also French Open champion in 2018, broke Anisimova's serve four times in the match, wrapping up victory in just over an hour.

"It's great to be back in the semi-finals," said the former world number one. "I'm very emotional right now. It means a lot."

The 30-year-old took charge early in the match on Centre Court, racing into a 5-1 lead and taking the set 6-2.

It was a similar story in the second set, with Halep again dominating and going 5-1 up with a double break.

Anisimova dug deep, earning her own break of serve when Halep served for the match but the Romanian stayed calm to serve out for the win.

"I had to stay strong on my legs -- they helped me today," said Halep, who has not dropped a set at



Wimbledon this year.

"I also needed my serve -- everything was good, and it finished well."

RYBAKINA FIGHT BACK

Rybakina came from behind to reach her first Grand Slam semi-final, firing 15 aces past Tomljanovic,

who had also made the last-eight in 2021.

"It is amazing. I am really happy to be into the semi-final. It was a really tough match," said the 23-year-old Moscow-born player.

"I started a bit slow, I didn't serve that well."

"Maybe I was nervous. She

played really well and was defending really good but I just tried to focus on my serve and try to find my way and in the end I found it."

Rybakina switched nationality in 2018. This year Russian and Belarusian players are banned from Wimbledon following the invasion of Ukraine.

Rybakina fired five aces in the first set but her 10 winners were cancelled out by her 10 unforced errors.

The steadier Tomljanovic did not concede a break point while a single break in the third game was enough to hand her the opener.

Back came Moscow-born

Kyrgios in last 4



AP ■ LONDON

Nick Kyrgios advanced to the semifinals at a Grand Slam tournament for the first time by beating Cristian Garin 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 (5) on Centre Court at Wimbledon.

Kyrgios reached the quarterfinals at the All England Club when he made his debut at the grass-court major in 2014 but this year was his first time getting back to that stage.

The Australian is the lowest ranked and first unseeded men's semifinalist since 2008. He is currently ranked 40th.

Kyrgios will face either two-time champion Rafael Nadal or Taylor Fritz in the semifinals on Friday.

Coco Gauff and Jack Sock have been eliminated from the mixed doubles tournament at Wimbledon.

The American pair lost to Australian duo Sam Stosur and Matthew Ebden in the semifinals 6-3, 5-7, 7-5 on No. 3 Court.

Both Gauff and Sock reached the third round in the singles tournaments. Stosur and Ebden will face either Sania Mirza and Mate Pavic or Desirae Krawczyk and Neal Skupski in the final.

Rybakina with a triple break in the second set to level the tie.

She swept through the decider and despite being broken when serving for the match in the seventh game, she made no mistake in the ninth with another ace sealing the win.

Halep and Rybakina have met

three times so far, with the Romanian holding a 2-1 edge.

Their most recent clash came at the 2021 US Open, when Halep came out on top in three sets in the third round.

"It is a big challenge for me. We have already played a few times and it was a tough battle," said Rybakina.

DE JONG ISN'T FOR SALE, SAYS BARCA PRESIDENT

AP ■ BARCELONA

Barcelona president Joan Laporta said Wednesday that Dutch midfielder Frenkie de Jong is not for sale despite rumours of a departure to the Premier League.

De Jong "is a Barca player and unless we have a need or interest in selling him, we don't want to sell him," Laporta said as the club unveiled new signing Franck Kessie.

"We know he has offers. If at some moment we were interested, we would consider it, but right now, we're not selling the player," Laporta insisted.

De Jong, 25, has been heavily linked with a move to Manchester United and a reunion with former Ajax boss Erik ten Hag, who is preparing for his first season at Old Trafford.

Laporta revealed the club had made an offer to France international Ousmane Dembele, whose contract with Barca expired at the end of June.

"Ousmane is no longer a Barca player, but we made him an offer," said Laporta. "He hasn't accepted it yet, but he wants to continue talking. "We're going to carry on speaking, at least for now."

Laporta also acknowledged having lunch with Jorge Mendes, the agent of Portugal superstar Cristiano Ronaldo, who is reportedly looking to leave Manchester United. "We discussed the transfer market in general, but I'm not going to specify if he spoke to me about a player in particular," said Laporta.



Sindhu, Prannoy in 2nd round; Saina knocked out

PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu had to toil before emerging victorious in the opening round of the Malaysia Masters while compatriot Saina Nehwal made a second consecutive first-round exit here on Wednesday.

The seventh-seeded Sindhu took close to an hour to knock out China's He Bing Jiao 21-13, 17-21, 21-15 and move to the second round.

With this win, world number seven Sindhu exacted revenge for her first-round exit from the Indonesia Open Super 1000 last month, when Bing Jiao had defeated her in straight games. The Chinese though still leads the head to head 10-9.

London Olympics Bronze medallist Saina, on the other hand, squandered a one-game lead to go down 21-16, 17-21, 14-21 to Kim Ga Eun of South Korea.

The world number 24 Indian had also made a first-round exit from the Malaysia Open Super 750 tournament last week.

In the men's singles, HS Prannoy sailed into the second round after he claimed a comfortable 21-19, 21-14 victory over Frenchman Brice Leverdez.

In the other men's singles events, B Sai Praneeth and Parupalli Kashyap also moved to the second



WITH THIS WIN, WORLD NUMBER SEVEN SINDHU EXACTED REVENGE FOR HER FIRST-ROUND EXIT FROM THE INDONESIA OPEN SUPER 1000 LAST MONTH, WHEN BING JIAO HAD DEFEATED HER IN STRAIGHT GAMES

round, but with contrasting wins.

While Praneeth hardly broke a sweat against Kevin Cordon, registering an easy 21-8, 21-9 win over the Guatemalan in less than half an hour, Kashyap came back from a one-game deficit to beat local favourite Tommy Sugiarto 16-21, 21-16, 21-16.

Praneeth will take on Li Shi Feng in the pre-quarterfinals.

However, it was the end of the road for Sameer Verma, who went down fighting to fourth seed Chinese Taipei shuttler Chou Tien Chen 21-10, 12-21, 14-21.

The women's doubles pair of N Sikki Reddy and Ashwini Ponnappa lost 19-21, 21-18, 16-21 to the Indonesian duo of Fabriana Kusuma and Amalia Pratiwi.

Diksha Dagar to lead Indian contingent

PTI ■ SITGES

Deaflympics gold medallist golfer Diksha Dagar will be leading a six-member Indian contingent in the Estrella Damn Ladies Open, to be held here from this week.

Diksha, who has been performing consistently for over a month, including in the Amundi German Masters, will set her sights at a top-10 finish while also hoping to win the Ladies European Tour for the second time in her career.

In 2019, Diksha became only the second Indian female golfer after Aditi Ashok to win the Ladies European Tour.

The 21-year-old golfer won the gold at the Deaflympics in Brazil this year.

Joining her in the contingent will be Tvesa Malik, who was India's best golfer on the LET Order of Merit last year.

The 26-year-old is currently struggling to find the kind of form that earned her a bunch of top-10s, including a runner-up finish last year.

The other Indians who are part of the six-woman contingent are Amandeep Drall, Vani Kapoor, Ridhima Dilawari and Neha Tripathi.

While Diksha has had only moderate success this season with five cuts in nine



starts and a best of tied 16th finish, Tvesa, on the other hand, has made six cuts in 12 events, while Drall has made five cuts in 11 starts.

The Indians will be facing a strong home challenge with Carlota Ciganda leading it.

Ciganda won the tournament in 2019 and was also part of the play-off for the title two years earlier in 2017. Ciganda is also the reigning Ladies European Tour winner.

Besides Ciganda, the tournament will feature some of the best names, including the likes of Ana Peláez, Nuria Iturriz, María Hernández, and Carmen Alonso.

Allyson Felix gets mixed relay nod, heading to 10th worlds

AP ■ INDIANAPOLIS

Allyson Felix was named to her 10th world championship team, where she will have a chance to run in the mixed relay event and add to her record medal collection.

Felix, whose 18 medals are the most in world-championship history, has announced that this will be her final season in track. At last month's US Championships, she finished sixth in the 400 meters and did not qualify for any individual events. But the 36-year-old was named to the mixed relay pool Tuesday when USA Track and Field released its 151-person roster for worlds.

The world championships run July 15-24 in Eugene, Oregon.

Missing from the roster was Sha'Carri Richardson, who failed to qualify for the finals of either the 100 or 200 meters at nationals. Richardson won the women's 100 at Olympic trials last year but was banned from the games after testing positive for a substance found in marijuana. Among those named to the women's 4x100 relay pool was Gabby Thomas, the 200-meter champion in 2021 who has been dealing with a hamstring injury this season.

Ballon d'Or winner Putellas to miss Euro 2022 with knee injury



AP ■ LONDON

Spain's Alexia Putellas, the reigning Ballon d'Or winner, has been ruled out of Euro 2022 after tearing the anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee on the eve of the tournament.

"Tests carried out on the Spain international this afternoon ... have confirmed the national team captain suffered a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament," the Spanish football federation said.

Putellas, 28, was expected to be one of the stars of the tour-

Inaki Williams to play for Ghana

AP ■ MADRID

Athletic Bilbao forward Inaki Williams on Tuesday announced that he will switch his allegiance from Spain to Ghana with the hope of representing the country at the 2022 World Cup.

Born in Bilbao to Ghanaian parents, the 28-year-old Williams, whose younger brother Nico also plays for Athletic, was capped once by Spain in a 2016 friendly.

"I feel the moment has come for me to find my origins within myself and with Africa and Ghana which means so much to me and

name that begins in England on Wednesday.

Spain had already lost their all-time top goalscorer Jennifer Hermoso to injury.

Hermoso, who recently signed for Mexican club Pachuca from Barcelona, sustained a knee injury last month shortly

my family," Williams said on social media.

"I want to return a small part of everything it has given to us because Ghana has played a significant part of becoming who I am as a person, as a son and as a brother."

"Today a new challenge begins. From now on, I will defend Ghana's T-shirt with all my will whilst I give my best. I'm one of the Black Stars," he added.

His availability for Ghana comes as a huge boost ahead of this year's World Cup in Qatar, where the 2010 quarter-finalists will face Portugal, Uruguay and South Korea in Group H.

after joining up with the Spain squad.

Spain were considered one of the favourites as they bid for a first major women's tournament success.

Spain open their campaign against Finland on July 8 in Milton Keynes.

High jumper Tejaswin Shankar to be part of Indian contingent for Birmingham CWG 2022

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) on Wednesday told the Delhi High Court that it will include the name of Tejaswin Shankar, a high jumper, in the list of players who are part of the Indian contingent for the upcoming 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

Justice Yashwant Varma, who was hearing a petition by the sportsman against his exclusion from the team of selected players for the sporting event, directed the AFI to forthwith transmit his name to the Indian Olympics Association (IOA) for further action and said that the court expected both AFI and IOA to proceed further while keeping in mind the prescribed timelines.

The AFI lawyer informed the court that there was a vacancy as one of the athletes, who were part of the Indian contingent for the relay event, was disqualified and therefore the petitioner's name shall now be forwarded in his place.

The Commonwealth

Games (CWG) is scheduled to be held in Birmingham from July 28 to August 8.

"Mr (Hrishikesh) Baruah, learned counsel appearing for AFI, has, on instructions, apprised the court that Arokiya Rajiv, an athlete who was part of the four by four hundred relay team, has come to be disqualified in trials which were held," the court recorded in the order.

"He accordingly submits that in view of the resultant vacancy which has occurred, the petitioner's name shall be included and forwarded forthwith amongst the list of athletes part of the Indian contingent for the upcoming CWG," it further noted.

"The statement so made is recorded and accepted. Let AFI consequently and forthwith transmit all particulars to IOA which may take further consequential steps," it said.

The court further said that it would keep the petition pending to examine the issues raised in it so that "this national embarrassment does not happen again".

Indian shooters eye glory at ISSF WC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A 49-member strong Indian shooting contingent will be eyeing glory when it takes part in the ISSF World Cup in Changwon, Korea from July 9-21.

The tournament assumes significance as the World Championships are also scheduled to be held this year.

The World Cup will be the first major assignment for the five new foreign coaches who have been roped in by the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) recently.

The foreign coaches who have joined the Indian team and will be working closely with the chief coaches are Munkhbayar Dorjsuren (Pistol), Russel Mark (Shotgun), Lauryn Mark (High Performance Manager), Juan Giha (Skeet) and Thomas Farnik (Rifle).

Dorjsuren, Mark, Giha and Farnik are Olympic medallists and represented their countries at the Olympic Games multiple times.

Athletes representing in the 10m rifle and pistol events, along with the trap shooters in three batches, were the first to arrive in Korea on Wednesday, with the rest of the contingent



reaching a day later.

RAHI PULLS OUT

While star shooters including the likes of Anish Bhanwala, Mairaj Ahmad Khan, Prithviraj Tondaiman, Sanjeev Rajput, Chain Singh, Anjum Moudgil, Manu Bhaker and Aishwary Tomar will be in action, reigning Asian Games champion Rahi Sarnobat has pulled out of the tournament due to medical reasons.

"The team is well prepared after rigorous training in the National camp conducted before the tournament. This is a very important tournament considering the World

Championships are next in line. We wish the team all the very best," said K. Sultan Singh, secretary-general of NRAI.

More than 432 athletes from 44 countries will take part in the tournament in Changwon.

In the previous combined World Cup stage in Baku, Azerbaijan, India had stood fifth with two gold and three silver medals, despite the pistol team choosing to opt out of the tournament.

India had initially planned to skip the Changwon World Cup but the postponement of the Asian Games in China led to an alteration of plans.

INDIA BEGIN PREPS TO PICK BEST WT20 ELEVEN

PTI ■ SOUTHAMPTON

Experimentation will go out of the window as India will get down to finalising their best eleven for the World Cup during the three-match T20 series against an ultra-aggressive England, beginning here on Thursday.

Skipper Rohit Sharma, who missed the fifth Test in Birmingham after contracting COVID-19, will be travelling to the port city on Wednesday and is expected to feature in the series-opener.

Test players including Virat Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravindra Jadeja, Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant will join the T20 squad from the second game onwards.

Their absence would give fringe players like Ruturaj Gaikwad and Sanju Samson one more game to make a statement though they seem to have fallen in the pecking order in India's list of probables for the World Cup in Australia.

A niggly meant Gaikwad could not open alongside Ishan Kishan in the two games in Ireland and if Rohit is back, he will have to warm the bench once again.

Kishan has done reasonably well in the chances that he has got and he will look to strengthen his position in the team as a reserve opener with a substantial knock against the mighty England.

With Kohli expected to be back at number three from game two, Deepak Hooda will be aiming for another match-winning effort to keep himself in the mix.

With a century and 47 not out against Ireland, Hooda has certainly made it tougher for the team management to keep him out of the eleven.

The uncapped duo of Rahul Tripathi and Arshdeep Singh have not been included for second and third T20 and it is unlikely they will get a look in on Thursday.



Suryakumar Yadav, who made a comeback from injury against Ireland, could not get going in the games in Malahide and will be backing himself to get back to his innovative best. He and Hooda were amongst the runs in the warm-up against Derbyshire last week.

In the bowling department, pacer Umran Malik will be brimming with confidence after defending 17 runs in the last over of a high-scoring second T20 against Ireland. However, he remains a work in progress and needs to improve on his accuracy.

The pacers including the seasoned Bhuvneshwar Kumar and wily Harshal

England vs India
Live from 10:30pm IST
SONY SIX, TEN 3

Patel were stunned by the Irish attack and against a tougher opposition, they will have to be at their best.

Yuzvendra Chahal will be expected to replace Ravi Bishnoi in the playing eleven.

India have about 15 T20 games to play before the T20 World Cup in Australia in October -- three against England in the current series, five against the West Indies (July 29-August 7), about 5 in Asia Cup (August-

September) and three against Australia (September).

The England series will mark the beginning of the process to identify its best XI for the marquee event.

For England, the series marks the beginning of the Jos Buttler era following the retirement of Eoin Morgan.

Ben Stokes and star of the fifth Test against India, Jonny Bairstow, have been rested from the series.

However, there is enough firepower in the England batting to rattle the opposition.

Both Buttler and Liam Livingstone showed devastating form in the IPL and would be looking to build on that.

SQUAD

England: Jos Buttler (Captain), Moeen Ali, Harry Brook, Sam Curran, Richard Gleeson, Chris Jordan, Liam Livingstone, Dawid Malan, Tymal Mills, Matthew Parkinson, Jason Roy, Phil Salt, Reece Topley and David Willey.

India: Rohit Sharma (Captain), Ishan Kishan, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Sanju Samson, Suryakumar Yadav, Deepak Hooda, Rahul Tripathi, Dinesh Karthik (wk), Hardik Pandya, Venkatesh Iyer, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel, Ravi Bishnoi, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Harshal Patel, Avesh Khan, Arshdeep Singh, Umran Malik.



Pant surges to career-best No. 5

PTI ■ DUBAI

India's star wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant blazed his way into a career-best fifth position in the latest ICC Test rankings announced on Wednesday, even as the out-of-form Virat Kohli dropped out of top-10 for the first time in six years.

Pant's meteoric rise in the rankings comes after his heroics in the recently-held COVID-delayed fifth Test between India and England in which he scored 146 and 57 across two innings.

It is worth mentioning that Pant scored two tons and three half centuries in his last six Test innings.

However, former India skipper Kohli dropped four places to 13th in the batting rankings, thanks to a prolonged lean run.

Interestingly, it is for the first time in six years that Kohli has found himself out of top 10 in the Test rankings.

Current Indian captain Rohit Sharma, who missed the Edgbaston Test after testing positive for COVID-19, also dropped one place in the rankings.

England batter Joe Root, who reigned supreme at Edgbaston with a sublime 142 in England's second innings, consolidated his position at the top of the rankings with 923 points, with Australians Marnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith taking the second and third positions respectively.

Jonny Bairstow, who is in the form of his life and played a pivotal role in guiding England to a historic victory with his unbeaten 114, climbed 11 places to 10th in the rankings.

Bairstow has so far scored 1218 runs at an average of 55.36 with six centuries in the current ICC World Test Championship cycle.

India aim to whitewash Sri Lanka

PTI ■ PALLEKELE

Confident India will look to complete the formalities and assert their supremacy by completing a whitewash of Sri Lanka in the third and final women's ODI here on Thursday.

Playing ODI cricket for the first time since the talismanic Mithali Raj retired from the game, the Indian team won the opening two games in contrasting fashion to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

The visitors had bagged the preceding T20I series 2-1.

Chasing similar targets, India looked much more confident in the second ODI as they galloped to 10-wicket win on Monday.

India controlled all aspects of the game. It was the kind of dominant display expected out of Harmanpreet Kaur and her troops through out the tour of the island nation.

After an underwhelming tour by their standards, star openers Smriti Mandhana and Shefali Verma finally joined the party with unbeaten half-centuries.

The duo, that had struggled to build a decent partnership and provide electrifying starts in the first ODI and the T20 series, would be keen for an encore in the final game.

New full-time skipper Harmanpreet has been India's most consistent player this series. The all-rounder has shone with the bat, her innings often turning out to be the difference between the two sides.

While, Indian spinners were ruling the roost on the slow tracks in the T20s,



Sri Lanka vs India
Live from 10:00 am IST
FANCODE

Have made a conscious effort to improve strike rotation: Shafali

PTI ■ PALLEKELE

Young Indian opener Shafali Verma, who is known for her big-hitting prowess, says she is making a conscious effort to improve her strike rotation to become a better cricketer.

The 18-year-old slammed a run-a-ball 71 not out, her career-best score in ODIs, in an unbroken 174-run partnership with Smriti Mandhana (94 not out) as India decimated the hosts by 10 wick-

ets here on Monday to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three match series.

The 18-year-old has not been able to maintain consistency in her performances, especially in the 50-over format.

"Having seen my past matches, I thought I lacked in taking singles, so I've worked on it. I'm trying to be better as I feel taking singles is very important to build your innings in ODIs," Shafali said on the eve of the third and final ODI of the series.

the ODI series has belonged to pacer Renuka Singh, who has picked seven wickets in the two 50-over matches, including a career best 4/28.

In the absence of veteran Jhulan Goswami, who has often been the side's best pacer, Renuka's performance shows that that young and relatively inexperienced Indian pace unit has potential.

A 3-0 series win will also boost the visitors' confidence for their next assignment — the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

Sri Lanka will, once again, be keen to pick up a conciliatory win like they did in the T20 series.

Let down by its batters this series, the Chamari Athapaththu-led side would hope it can navigate the Indian bowling attack better in the dead rubber.

On the bowling front, the spin duo of Inoka Ranawera and Oshadi Ranasinghe have been the stand-out players, doing most of the heavy lifting.

Dhawan to lead India in WI ODIs



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shikhar Dhawan was on Wednesday named India captain for the three ODIs against the West Indies in the absence of regular skipper Rohit Sharma, while Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant were among those who have been rested for the series beginning on July 22 in Port of Spain, Trinidad.

Two other senior players, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammad Shami have also been rested. Hardik Pandya, who recently made his India

comeback following a successful IPL, is also not a part of the side.

Deepak Hooda, Sanju Samson, Ruturaj Gaikwad and Avesh Khan, who are not part of ODI squad for the series in England beginning July 12, have been included in the 16-member team for the West Indies tour.

Shubman Gill, who last played an ODI in December 2020, has also got the selectors' nod.

Ravindra Jadeja has been named Dhawan's deputy for the series.

Dhawan, who only plays ODI, had first captained the side during the tour of Sri Lanka last year when the Test specialists were in England.

There has been criticism from some quarters regarding the appointment of too many captains of the Indian team over the past one year with Bumrah, Pant, Rahul, Hardik, Dhawan leading the side due to scheduling and injury issues, and as part of workload management.

All the three games will be played in Port of Spain.

The games in the West Indies are the only ODIs India will play before the T20 World Cup in Australia and therefore, senior players being rested doesn't come entirely as a surprise.

After the ODIs, India will play five T20Is against the West Indies in the Caribbean and the United States, the squad for which is yet to be announced.

Considering every T20I game is important before the World Cup in Australia, the senior players are likely to return for the five-match series to be played from July 29 to August 7. The T20I matches will be played in Trinidad, St Kitts and Lauderhill in Florida.

ODI Squad: Shikhar Dhawan (captain), Ravindra Jadeja (vice-captain), Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shubman Gill, Deepak Hooda, Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Ishan Kishan (wk), Sanju Samson (wk), Shardul Thakur, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel, Avesh Khan, Prasidh Krishna, Mohd Siraj, Arshdeep Singh.

Smith unfazed by 'Bazball'

AP ■ GALLE

Australia's Steve Smith said Wednesday he found England's new attacking "Bazball" approach entertaining to watch, but questioned whether it was sustainable.

England have won all four Tests under new coach Brendon "Baz" McCullum and skipper Ben Stokes with a fearless new mentality, including thrashing India on Tuesday.

"I've watched a little bit of it, it's certainly been entertaining, they're coming out playing their shots," Smith said ahead of Australia's second Test against Sri Lanka starting on Friday.

"Even someone like Alex Lees started to come down the wicket when he was on nothing really to play the way he played (against India)," he told reporters.

Having tongue-in-cheek shouted "Bazball" before whacking a shot in an earlier net session, Smith said he was "intrigued to see how long it lasts, if it's sustainable."

"If you come on a wicket that's got some grass and Josh Hazlewood, (Pat) Cummins and (Mitchell) Starc are rolling



in at you. Is it going to be the same? We'll see what happens."

England's Joe Root now has more centuries to his name than Smith, but the Australian was quick to point out that his rival has played 35 more Tests.

"He's a quality player and looks like he's pretty tough to get out at the moment," Smith said of the prolific run-getter.

The touring Australian team have themselves played attacking cricket on turning pitches to go one-up in the two-Test series with a hammering

of the hosts in the opener.

Spinner Nathan Lyon led the bowling charge with nine wickets in the match and the batsmen took control of the opposition spinners with Cameron Green scoring 77 as he used the sweep shot to good effect.

"We went at a good pace in the first Test. If you were sitting there not playing your shots or looking to score, you were probably going to get out eventually. So it was getting them before they get us," Smith said.

India eye win against NZ to stay in hunt

PTI ■ AMSTELVEEN

Lacklustre Indian women's hockey team need to tick all boxes against New Zealand in its final Pool B match to seal a direct quarterfinal place in the FIH World Cup, here on Thursday.

The Indians, who achieved a historic fourth place finish in last year's Olympics, drew 1-1 against Tokyo bronze medalist England and China in their first two pool matches.

The Savita-led side is currently placed third in Pool B with two points below China and leaders New Zealand, who defeated England 3-1 on Tuesday.

"New Zealand will be a tough team to play. They are very dangerous in their counter-attack and we will have to be ready for that, on the ball we have to play to our strengths," chief coach Janneke Schopman said.

According to the tournament format, the 16 teams are divided in four pools of four teams each. The top four sides from each pool will directly qualify for the quarterfinals, while the second and third



India vs New Zealand
Live from 11:00pm IST
STAR SPORTS 1

placed teams will feature in the crossovers.

The winner of the cross over matches will grab the remaining four quarterfinal spots. So, India would look for an outright win against New Zealand and hope for a Chinese draw or a loss against England to top Pool B.

But going by the way they played in the first two matches, it would be easier said than done.

While the Indian defence

has impressed in both the matches, denying England a single penalty corner in the first game, it is the performance of the forwardline and midfield which was found wanting.

Barring Vandana Katariya, who scored India's two goals, no other striker could live upto expectations so far with the likes of Lalremisiami, Sharmila Devi and Navneet Kaur cutting a sorry figure.

It is not that the Indians didn't create chances, but they

failed to grab those opportunities.

The midfield too needs to raise their game as it looked rusty against China.

Penalty corner conversion is also an area of concern for Schopman as India made use of just two out of the 12 earned in two games, and that too both the goals coming through indirectly from the sticks of Vandana.

While against England, Vandana scored from a rebound, against China she got a beauti-

ful deflection to Gurjit's flick to draw India level.

"I thought we started well against a tight Chinese defense. We were unlucky to not score early on and one moment of not paying attention defensively resulted in us conceding a goal," Schopman said.

"After that we struggled for a bit but when we found the space, we were able to play some good combinations."

"The PC goal was great but felt like we forgot to push through after that with China being more aggressive in the end phase."

"We are where we are but obviously, we would have liked to have more points. Our pool is incredibly tough and small things will make the difference," she added.

Gurjit Kaur too needs to polish her skills and raise her conversion rate if India have to progress far in the tournament.

The Black Sticks women, however, would be brimming with confidence after the win over England.

Both the sides would have a fair idea about the equations they need as China and England play earlier on Thursday.